

The notes are merely suggestions for the writer's consideration. In regard to style here and there much will have to be done. A lecture, a book, some such a permanent work. HOME EDUCATION. Good. CKP

## LECTURE I.

### SOME PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS.

Nor the least sign of the higher status they have gained is the growing desire for work that obtains amongst educated women. The world wants the work of such women; and, presently, as education becomes more general, we shall see all women with the capacity to work falling into the ranks of working women, with definite tastes, and fixed hours; and as for wages, the pleasure and honour of doing useful work if they are under no necessity to earn money.

Now, that work which is of most importance to society is the bringing up and instruction of the children—in the school, certainly, but far more in the home, because it is more than anything else the home influences brought to bear upon the child that determine the character and career of the future man or woman. It is a great thing to be a parent: there is no promotion, no dignity, to compare with it. The parents of but one child may be cherishing what shall prove a blessing to all the world. But then, intrusted with such a charge, they are not free to say, "I may do as I will with mine own." The children are, in truth, to be regarded less as personal property than as public trusts, put into the hands of parents that they make the very most of them for the good of society. And this responsibility is not equally divided between the parents: it is upon the mothers of the present that the future of the world depends, because it is the mothers who have the sole direction of the children's early, most impressive years. This is why we hear so frequently of great men who have had good mothers—that is, mothers who brought up their children themselves and did not make over their gravest duty to indifferent persons. "Give us a child until his sixth year," said the Jesuits, "and you may do what you will with him afterwards." Why? Because by that time the currents of the child's character have, so to speak, set; his emotions, his desires, his intellectual tastes have taken direction, and "not all the king's horses nor all the king's men can change that direction, though they may raise a dam here and there. Like consistent men, these Jesuits promoted their teachers downwards in their schools; that is to say, the least-proved men had the highest classes, and according as a man showed insight, power, perception of character, he was promoted to teach the very little ones.

We are waking up to our duties, and in proportion as mothers become more highly educated and efficient, they will doubtless feel the more strongly that the education of their children, during the first seven or eight years of life, is an undertaking hardly to be intrusted to any hands but their own. And they will take it up as their profession—that is, with the diligence, regularity, and punctuality which men bestow on their professional labours.

That the mother may know what she is about, may come thoroughly furnished to her work, she should have something more than a hearsay acquaintance with the theory of education, and with those conditions of the child's nature upon which such theory rests.

"The training of children," says Mr. Herbert Spencer,—"physical, moral, and intellectual,—is dreadfully defective. And in great measure it is so, because parents are devoid of that knowledge by which this training can alone be rightly guided. What is to be expected when one of the most intricate of problems is undertaken by those who have given scarcely a thought to the principle on which its solution depends? For shoemaking or house-building, for the management of a ship or of a locomotive engine, a long apprenticeship is needful. Is it, then, that the unfolding of a human being in body and mind is so comparatively simple a process that any one may superintend and regulate it with no preparation whatever? If not—if the process is, with one exception, more complex than any in nature, and the task of ministering to it one of surpassing difficulty—is it not madness to make no provision for such a task? Better sacrifice accomplishments than omit this all-essential instruction. . . . Some acquaintance with the first principles of physiology and the elementary truths of psychology is indispensable for the right bringing-up of children. . . . Here are the indisputable facts:—that the development of children in mind and body follows certain laws; that unless these laws are in some degree conformed to by parents, death is inevitable; that unless they are in a great degree conformed to, there must result serious physical and mental defects; and that only when they are completely conformed to, can a perfect maturity be reached. Judge, then, whether all who may one day be parents should not strive with some anxiety to learn what these laws are."

\* Herbert Spencer, "Education."

## A Method of Education.

Never was it more necessary for parents to face for themselves this question of education in all its bearings. Hitherto, children have been brought up upon traditional methods mainly. The experience of our ancestors, floating in a vast number of educational maxims, is handed on from lip to lip; and few or many of these maxims form the educational code of every household.

But we hardly take in how complete a revolution advancing science is effecting in the theory of education. The traditions of the elders have been tried and found wanting; it will be long before the axioms of the new school pass into common currency; and, in the mean time, parents are thrown upon their own resources, and absolutely must weigh principles, and adopt a method, of education for themselves.

For instance, according to the former code, a mother might use her slipper now and then, to good effect and without blame; but now, the person of the child is, whether rightly or wrongly, held sacred, and the infliction of pain for moral purposes is pretty generally disallowed.

Again, the old rule for the children's table was, "the plainer the better, and let hunger bring sauce;" now, the children's diet must be at least as nourishing and as various as that of their elders; and appetite, the craving for certain kinds of food, hitherto a vicious tendency, to be repressed, is now, within certain limitations, the parents' most trustworthy guide in arranging a dietary for their children.

That children should be trained to endure hardship was a principle of the old régime. "I shall never make a sailor if I can't face the wind and rain," said a little fellow of five, who was taken out on a bitter night to see a torchlight procession; and, though shaking with cold, he declined the shelter of a shed. Nowadays, the shed is everything; the children must not be permitted to suffer from fatigue or exposure.

That children should do as they are bid, mind their books, and take pleasure as it offers when nothing stands in the way, sums up the old theory; now, the pleasures of the children are apt to be made of more account than their duties.

Formerly, they were brought up in subjection; now, the elders give place, and the world is made for the children.

English people rarely go so far as the parents of that story in "French Home Life," who arrived an hour late at a dinner-party, because they had been desired by their girl of three to undress and go to bed when she did, and were able to steal away only when the child was asleep. We do not go so far, but that is the direction we are moving in; and how far the new theories of education are wise and humane, the outcome of more widely spread physiological and psychological knowledge, and how far they justifier to the child-worship we are all succumbing to, is not a question to be decided off-hand.

At any rate, it is not too much to say that a parent, who does not follow reasonably a fully thought-out method of education, fails—now, more than ever before—to fulfil the claims his children have upon him.

Method implies two things—a way to an end, and step by step progress in that way. Further, the following of a method implies an idea, a mental image, of the end or object to be arrived at. What do you propose that education shall effect in and for your child? Again, method is natural; easy, yielding, unobtrusive, simple, as the ways of Nature herself; yet, watchful, careful, all-pervading, all-compelling. Method, with the end of education in view, presses the most unlikely matters into service to bring about that end; but with no more tiresome mechanism than the sun employs when it makes the winds to blow and the waters to flow simply by shining. The parent who sees his way—that is the exact force of method—to educate his child, will make use of every circumstance of the child's life, almost without intention on his own part, so easy and spontaneous is a method of education based upon Natural Law. Does the child eat or drink, does he come, or go, or play—all the time he is being educated, though he is as little aware of it as he is of the act of breathing. There is always the danger that a method, a *bona fide* method, should degenerate into a mere system. The *Kinder Garten* method, for instance, truly deserves the name, as having been conceived and perfected by large-hearted educators to aid the many-sided evolution of the living, growing, most complex human being; but what a miserable wooden system does it become in the hands of ignorant practitioners!

A "system of education" is an alluring fancy; more so, on some counts, than a *method*, because it is pledged to more definite calculable results. By means of a system certain developments may be brought about through the observance of given rules. Shorthand, dancing, how to pass examinations, how to become a good accountant, or a woman of society, may all be learned upon systems.

System—the observing of rules until the habit of doing certain things, of behaving in certain ways, is confirmed, and, therefore, the art is acquired—is so successful in achieving precise results, that it is no wonder there should be endless attempts to straiten the whole field of education to the limits of a system.

If a human being were a machine, education could do no more for him than to set him in action in prescribed ways,

and the work of the educator would be, simply, to adopt a good working system or set of systems.

But the educator has to deal with a self-acting, self-developing being, and his business is to guide, and assist in; the production of the latent good in that being, the dissipation of the latent evil, the preparation of the child to take his place in the world at his best, with every capacity for good that is in him developed into a power.

Though system is highly useful as an instrument of education, a "system of education" is mischievous, as producing only mechanical actions instead of the vital growth and movement of a living being.

It is worth while to point out the opposite characters of a system and a method, because parents let themselves be run away with often enough by some plausible "system," the object of which is to produce development in one direction—of the muscles, of the memory, of the reasoning faculty—and to rest content, as if that single development were a complete all-round education. This easy satisfaction arises from the sluggishness of human nature, to which any definite scheme is more agreeable than the constant watchfulness, the unforeseen action, called for when the whole of a child's existence is to be used as the means of its education. But who is sufficient for an education so comprehensive, so incessant? A parent may be willing to undergo simply any definite labours for his child's sake; but to be always catering for his behoof, always contriving that circumstances shall play upon him for his good, is the part of a god and not of a man! A reasonable objection enough, if one looks upon education as an endless series of independent efforts, each to be thought out and acted out on the spur of the moment; but the fact is, that a few broad essential principles cover the whole field, and, these once fully laid hold of, it is as easy and natural to act upon them as it is to act upon our knowledge of such facts as that fire burns and water flows. I shall try to put these few fundamental principles before you in their practical bearing.

Meantime, let us consider one or two preliminary questions, rather by way of clearing the decks for action than as any part of a method of education.

### The Child's Estate.

And, first, let us consider where and what the little being is who is intrusted to the care of human parents. A tablet to be written upon? A twig to be bent? Wax, to be moulded? Very likely; but he is much more—a being belonging to an altogether higher estate than ours, as it were; a prince committed to the fostering care of peasants. Hear Wordsworth's estimate of the child's estate:—

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:  
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,  
Hath had elsewhere its setting,  
And cometh from afar;

Not in entire forgetfulness,  
And not in utter nakedness,  
But trailing clouds of glory do we come

From God, who is our home:  
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie  
Thy soul's immensity;

Thou best philosopher, who yet dost keep  
Thy heritage; thou eye among the blind,  
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,  
Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,—

Mighty Prophet! Seer-bless!  
On whom those truths that rest,  
On whom those truths that rest,

Which we are telling all our lives to find;  
Thou, over whom thy immortality  
Broods like the day, a master o'er a slave,  
A presence which is not to be put by;

Thou little child, yet glorious in the might  
Of heaven-born freedom, on thy being's height,—

and so on, through the whole of that great ode, which, next after the Bible, shows the deepest insight into what is peculiar to the children in their nature and estate. "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." "Except ye become as little children ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven?" "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And He called a little child, and set him in the midst." Here is the Divine estimate of the child's estate. It is worth while for parents to ponder every utterance in the Gospels about the children, divesting themselves of the notion that these sayings belong, in the first place, to the grown-up people who have become as little children. What these profound sayings are, and how much they may mean, it is beyond us to discuss here; only, they appear to cover far more than Wordsworth claims for the children in his sublimest reach,—

"Trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God, who is our home."

It may surprise parents who have not given much attention to the subject, to discover also a code of education in the Gospels, expressly laid down by Christ. It is summed up in three commandments, and all three have a negative character, as if the chief thing required of grown-up people is that they should do no sort of injury to the children: "Take heed that ye offend not—despise not—hinder not—one of these little ones."

So run the three educational laws of the New Testament, which, when separately examined, appear to me to cover all the help we can give the children and all the harm we can

### Offending the Children.

The first and second of the Divine edicts appear to include our sins of commission and of omission against the children: we offend them, when we do by them that which we ought not to have done; we despise them, when we leave undone those things which, for their sakes, we ought to have done. An offence, we know, is, literally, a stumbling-block, that which trips up the walker and causes him to fall. Mothers know what it is to clear the floor of every obstacle when baby takes his unsteady little runs from chair to chair, from one pair of loving arms to another. The table-leg, the footstool, the child's toy on the floor, which has caused a fall and a bruise and a pitiful cry, is a thing to be deplored; why did not somebody put it out of the way, so that baby should not stumble? But the little child is going out into the world, with uncertain tottering steps, in many directions. There are causes of stumbling not so easy to remove as an offending footstool; and woe to him who causes the child to fall!

"Naughty baby!" says mamma; and baby's eyes droop, and a sweet flush rises over neck and brow, the little sensitive throbbing soul hides away in its mother's breast. It is very wonderful, very "funny," some people think, and say "Naughty baby!" when baby is sweetly good, to amuse themselves with the sight of the infant soul rising visibly before their eyes. But what does it mean, this display of feeling, conscience in the child, before any human teaching can have reached him? No less than this, that he is born a law-abiding being, with a sense of "may," and "must not," of right and wrong. That is how the children are sent into the world with the warning, "Take heed that ye offend not one of these little ones." And—this being so—who has not met big girls and boys, the children of right-minded parents, who yet do not know what "must" means, who are not moved by "ought," whose hearts feel no stir at the solemn name of "duty," who know no higher rule of life than "I want," and "I don't want," "I like," and "I don't like"? Heaven help parents and children when it has come to that! But how has it been brought about that the babe, with an acute sense of right and wrong even when it can understand little of human speech, should grow into the boy or girl already proving "the curse of lawless heart"? By slow degrees, here a little and there a little, as all that is good or bad in character comes to pass. "Naughty!" says the mother, again, when a little hand is thrust into the sugar-bowl; and a pair of roguish eyes seek hers furtively, from under their lashes, to measure, as they do unerringly, how far the little pilferer may go. It is very amusing; the mother "cannot help laughing;" and—the little trespass is allowed to pass: and, what the poor mother has not thought of, an offence, a cause of stumbling, has been cast into the path of her two-years-old child. He has learned already that that which is "naughty" may yet be done with impunity, and he goes on improving his knowledge. It is needless to continue; everybody knows the steps by which the mother's "no" comes to be disregarded, her refusal teased into consent. Because the child has learned to believe that he has nothing to overcome but his mother's disinclination—if she choose to let him do this and that, there is no reason why she should not,—he can make her choose to let him do the thing forbidden, and then may do it. The next step in the argument is not too great for childish wits: if his mother does what she chooses, of course he will do what he chooses, if he can, henceforward; and the child's life becomes an endless struggle to get his own way,—a struggle in which a parent is pretty sure to be worsted, having many things to think of, while the child sticks persistently to the thing which has his fancy for the moment.

And where is the beginning of all this tangle, spoiling the lives of parent and child alike? In this: that the mother begins with no sufficient sense of duty; she thought herself free to allow and disallow, to say and unsay, at pleasure, as if the child were hers to do what she liked with. The child has never discovered a background of "must" behind his mother's decisions; he does not know that she must not let him break his sister's playthings, gorge himself with cake, spoil the pleasure of other people, because these things are not right. Let the child perceive that his parents are law-compelled as well as he, that they simply cannot allow him to do the things which have been forbidden, and he submits with the sweet meekness which belongs to his age. To give reasons to a child is usually out of place, and is a sacrifice of parental dignity; but he is quick enough to read the "must" and "ought" which rule her, in his mother's face and manner, and in the fact that she is not to be moved from a resolution in any question of right and wrong.

This, of allowing him in what is wrong, is only one of many ways in which the loving mother may offend her child. Through ignorance or wilfulness, which is worse, she may

deal with the child who is resentful, or stubborn, or reckless, because it is born in her, her mother's nature, or her grandfather's? Think of the trick of the eye, the action of the hand, repeated from father to son; the peculiar character of the handwriting, traceable, as in the family of Miss Power Cobbe, through five generations; the artistic temperament, the taste for music or drawing, running in families: here you get nature with a twist, confirmed, sealed, riveted, utterly proof, you would say, against any attempt to alter or modify it.

And, once more, physical conditions come in force. The puny feeble child, and the sturdy urchin who never ails, must necessarily differ from one another in the strength of their desires and affections.

What, then, with the natural desires, affections, and emotions common to the whole race,—what with the tendencies which each family derives by descent, and those peculiarities which the individual owes to his own constitution of body and brain,—human nature, the sum of all these, makes out for itself a strong case; so much so, that one is inclined to think the best that can be done is to let it alone, let every child develop, unhindered, according to the elements of character and disposition that are in him. This is precisely what half the parents in the world, and three-fourths of the teachers are content to do: and what is the consequence? That the world is making advances, but the progress is amongst the few whose parents have taken their education seriously in hand; while the rest, who have been allowed to *stay where they were*, be no more or no better than nature made them, act as a heavy drag: for, indeed, the fact is, that they do not stay where they were; it is unchangeably true that the child who is not being constantly raised to a higher and a higher platform, will sink to a lower and a lower. Wherefore, it is as much the parent's duty to educate his child into moral strength and purpose, and intellectual activity, as it is to feed him and clothe him, and that, in spite of his nature, if it must be so.

## II.

I was beginning to see my way—not yet out of the psychological difficulty, which, so far as I was concerned, blocked the way to any real education; but now I could put my finger on the place, and that was something. Thus:—

The will of the child is pitifully feeble, weaker in the children of the weak, stronger in the children of the strong, but hardly ever to be counted upon as a *power* in education. The nature of the child—his human nature—being the sum of what he is as a human being, and what he is in right of the stock he comes of, and what he is as the result of his own physical and mental constitution—this nature is incalculably strong.

The problem before the educator is to give the child control over his own nature, to enable him to hold himself in hand as much in regard to the traits we call good, as to those we call evil. Many a man makes shipwreck on the rock of what he grew up to think his characteristic virtue—his open-handedness, for instance.

In looking for a solution of this problem, I do not undervalue the Divine grace—far otherwise; but we do not always make enough of the fact that the Divine grace is exerted on the lines of enlightened human effort; that the parent, for instance, who takes the trouble to understand what he is about in educating his child, deserves, and assuredly gets, support from above; and that Rebecca, let us say, had no right to bring up her son to be "thou worm, Jacob," in the trust that divine grace would, speaking reverently, pull him through. Being a pious man, the son of pious parents, he was pulled through, but his days, he complains at the end, were "few and evil."

And, indeed, this is what too many Christians parents expect: they let a child grow, free as the wild bramble, putting forth unchecked whatever is in him—thorn, coarse flowers, insipid fruit,—trusting, they will tell you, that the grace of God will prune and dig and prop the wayward branches lying prone. And their trust is not always misplaced; but the poor man endures anguish, is torn asunder in the process of recovery which his parents might have spared him, had they trained the early shoots which should develop by-and-by into the character of their child.

Nature, then, strong as it is, is not invincible; and, at its best, nature is not to be permitted to ride rampant. Bit and bridle, hand and voice, will get the utmost of endeavour out of her if her training be taken in hand in time; but let nature run wild, like the forest ponies, and not spur or whip will break her in.

### Habit may supplant "Nature."

"HABIT is ten natures." If that be true, strong as nature is, habit is not only as strong, but *tenfold* as strong. Here, then, have we that stronger than he, able to overcome the strong man armed. But habit runs on lines of nature: the cowardly child *habitually* lies that he may escape blame; the loving child has a hundred endearing *habits*, the good-natured child has a *habit* of giving, the selfish child a *habit* of keeping. Habit, working thus according to nature, is simply nature in action, growing strong by exercise. But, Habit, to be the lever to lift the child, must work contrary to Nature, or, at any rate, independently of her.

Directly one begins to look out for the working of habit

on these lines, examples crowd upon one; there are the children trained in careful habits, who never soil their clothes; those trained in reticent habits, who never speak of what is done at home, and answer indiscreet questions with "I don't know;" there are the children brought up in courteous habits, who make way for their elders with gentle grace, and more readily for the poor woman with the basket than for the well-dressed lady; and there are children trained in grudging habits, who never offer to yield, or go, or do.

Such habits as these, good, bad, or indifferent, are they natural to the children? No, but they are what their mothers have brought them up to; and, as a matter of fact, there is *nothing* which a mother cannot bring her child up to, and there is hardly a mother anywhere who has not some two or three crotchets—sometimes principles—which her children never violate. So that it comes to this—given, a mother with liberal views on the subject of education, and she simply cannot help working her own views into her children's habits; given, on the other hand, a mother whose final question is, "What will people say?" and what will people think? and how will it look?" and the children grow up with habits of seeming, and not of being; they are content to appear well-dressed, well-mannered, and well-intentioned to outsiders, with very little effort after beauty, order, and goodness at home, and in each other's eyes.

The extraordinary power of habit in forcing nature into new channels hardly requires illustration; one has only to see a small boy at a circus riding two barebacked ponies with a foot on the back of each, or a little pantomime fairy dancing on air, or a clown behaving like an india-rubber ball, or any of the thousand feats of skill and dexterity which we pay our shillings to see—mental feats as well as bodily, though, happily, these are the rarer—to be convinced that exactly anything may be accomplished by training; that is, the cultivation of persistent habits. And this power of habit is not seen in human beings alone. The cat goes in search of her dinner always at the same time and to the same place—that is, if it is usual to feed her in one spot. Indeed, the habit of place is so much to the cat, that she will rather die than forsake the spot she is accustomed to. As for the dog, he is still more a "bundle of habits" than his master. Scatter crumbs for the sparrows at nine o'clock every morning, and at nine o'clock they will come for their breakfast, crumbs or no crumbs. Darwin inclines to think that the terror and avoidance shown towards man by the wild birds and lesser animals is simply a matter of *transmitted* habit; he landed upon certain of the Pacific islands where the birds had never seen man before, and they lighted upon him and flew about him with utter fearlessness. *"Come nearer home, what evidence of the mastery of habit is more sad, and more overwhelming, than the habits of the drunkard, for instance, persisted in, in spite of reason, conscience, purpose, religion, every motive which should influence a thinking being?"*

All this is nothing new; we have always known that "use is second nature," and that "man is a bundle of habits." It was not the fact, but the application of the fact, and the physiology of habit, that were new and exceedingly valuable ideas to me, and I hope they may be of some use to you. It was new to me, for instance, to perceive that it rests with parents and teachers to lay down lines of habit on which the life of the child may run henceforth with little jolting or miscarriage, and may advance in the right direction with the minimum of effort.

### The Laying down of Lines of Habit.

This relation of habit to human life—as the rails on which it runs to a locomotive—is perhaps the most suggestive and helpful to the educator; for, just as it is, on the whole, easier for the locomotive to pursue its ways on the rails than to take a disastrous run off them, so it is easier for the child to follow lines of habit carefully laid down than to run off the lines at his peril. It follows, that this business of laying down lines towards the unexplored country of the child's future, is a very serious and responsible one for the parent. It rests with him to consider well the tracks over which the child should travel with profit and pleasure, and, along these tracks, to lay down lines so invitingly smooth and easy that the little traveller is going along them at full speed without stopping to consider whether he chooses to go that way or not.

But supposing that the doing of a certain action a score or two of times in unbroken sequence forms a habit which it is as easy to follow as not; that, persist still further in the habit *without lapses*, and it becomes second nature, quite difficult to shake off; continue it further, through a course of years, and the habit has the strength of *ten* natures, you cannot break through it without doing real violence to yourself;—grant all this, and, also, that it is possible to form in the child the habit of doing and saying, even of thinking and feeling all that it is desirable he should do or say, think or feel, and do you not take away the child's freewill, make a mere automaton of him by his excessive culture?

In the first place, whether you choose or no to take any trouble about the formation of his habits, it is *habit*, all the same, which will govern ninety-nine one hundredths of the child's life: he is the mere automaton, you describe; as for

the child's becoming the creature of habit, that is not left with the parent to determine. We are all mere creatures of habit. We think our accustomed thoughts, make our usual small talk, go through the trivial round, the common task, without any self-determining effort of will at all. If it were not so—if we had to think, to deliberate, about each operation of the bath or the table—life would simply not be worth having; the perpetually repeated effort of decision would wear us out. But let us be thankful life is not thus laborious. For a hundred times we act or think, it is not necessary to choose to will, say, more than once. And the little emergencies which compel an act of will will fall in the children's lives just about as frequently as in our own. These we cannot save them from, nor is it desirable that we should. What we can do for them is to secure that they have habits which shall lead them in ways of order, propriety, and virtue, instead of leaving their wheels to make ugly ruts in miry places.

And then, even in emergencies, in every sudden difficulty and temptation that requires an act of will, why, conduct is still apt to run on the lines of the familiar habit. The boy who has been accustomed to find both profit and pleasure in his books does not fall easily into idle ways because he is attracted by an idle schoolfellow. The girl who has been carefully trained to speak the exact truth simply does not think of a lie as a ready means of getting out of a scrape, little coward as she may be.

At last I was beginning to see my way out of my educational difficulties. But this doctrine of habit, was it, after all, any more than a quack treatment of the child's symptoms? Why should the doing of an act or the thinking of a thought, say, a score of times in unbroken succession have any tendency to make the doing of that act or the thinking of that thought a part of the child's nature? One might swallow the doctrine as an act of faith resting on experience; but if one could discover the *raison d'être* of this enormous force of habit it would be possible to go to work on the laying down of habits with real purpose and method.

### The Physiology of Habit.

A work of Dr. Carpenter's gave me the clue I was in search of. In his "Mental Physiology"—a delightful book, by the way—he works out the analogy between mental and physical activity, and shows that the correspondence in effect is due to a correspondence in cause. Thus, to state roughly the doctrine of the school Dr. Carpenter represents, the tissues, as muscular tissue, for instance, undergo constant waste and as constant reparation. Certain modes of muscular action are natural to us, as walking, and standing erect; other modes we acquire as writing or dancing: but the acquired mode of action becomes just as easy as the natural mode. Why? Because it is the law of the constantly growing tissues that they should form themselves according to the mode of actions required of them. Thus the joints and muscles of the child's hand very soon accommodate themselves to the mode of action required of them in holding and guiding the pen. Observe, it is not that the child learns with his mind how to use his pen, in spite of his muscles; but that the newly growing muscles themselves take form according to the action required of them. And here is the explanation of all the mountebank feats which appear simply impossible to the untrained looker-on. They are impossible to him, because his joints and muscles have not the same powers which have been produced in the mountebank by a process of early training. So much for mere bodily activities. And here we have the reason why children should learn dancing, riding, swimming, calisthenics, every form of activity which requires a training of the muscles, at a very early age: the fact being, that muscles and joints have not merely to conform themselves to new uses, but to grow to a modified pattern; and this growth and adaptation takes place with the greatest facility in early youth. Of course, the man whose muscles have kept the habit of adaptation, picks up new games, new muscular exercises, without very great labour. But teach a ploughman to write, and you see the enormous physical difficulty which unaccustomed muscles have in growing to any new sort of effort. Here we see how important it is to keep watch over the habits of enunciation, carriage of the head, and so on, which the child is forming hour by hour. The poke, the stoop, the indistinct utterance, is not a mere trick to be left off at pleasure "when he is older and knows better," but is all the time growing into him, becoming a part of himself; certain muscles are conforming themselves, growing to certain kinds of misbehaviour. And to correct bad habits of speaking, for instance, it will not be enough for the child to intend to speak plainly and to try to speak plainly; he will not be able to do so habitually until some degree of new growth has taken place in the organs of voice whilst he is making efforts to form the new habit.

But, practically, everybody knows that the body, and every part of the body, accommodates itself very readily to the uses it is put to; we know that if a child accustom herself to stand on one foot, thus poking up one shoulder, the habit will probably end in curvature of the spine; that to permit drooping shoulders, and, consequently, contracted chest, is to prepare the way for lung disease. The physical consequences of bad habits of this sort are so evident, that

we cannot blind ourselves to the relation of cause and effect. What we are less prepared to admit is, that habits which do not appear to be in any sense physical—a flippant habit, a truthful habit, an orderly habit—should also make their mark upon a physical tissue, and that it is to this physical effect the enormous strength of habit is probably due. Yet, when we consider that brain, the physical brain, is the exceedingly delicate organ by means of which we think and feel and desire, love, and hate, and worship, it is not surprising that that organ should be modified by the work it has to do; to put the matter picturesquely, it is as if every familiar train of thought made a rut in the nervous substance of the brain, into which the thoughts run lightly of their own accord, and out of which they can only be got by a great effort of will. Thus, the mistress of the house knows that when her thoughts are free to take their own course, they run to cares of the house or the larder, to to-morrow's dinner or the winter's clothing; that is, thought runs into the rut which has been, so to speak, worn for it by constant repetition. The mother's thoughts run on her children, the painter's on pictures, the poet's on poems; those of the anxious head of the house, it may be, on money cares, until, in times of unusual pressure, the thoughts beat, beat, beat, in that well-worn rut of ways and means, and decline to run in any other channel, until the poor man loses his reason, simply because he cannot get his thoughts out of that one channel made in the substance of his brain. And, indeed, "that way madness lies" for every one of us, in the persistent preying of any one train of thought upon the brain tissue. Pride, resentment, jealousy, an invention that a man has laboured over, an opinion he has conceived, any line of thought which he has no longer the power to divert, will endanger a man's sanity. If we love, hate, think, feel, worship, at the expense of actual physical effort on the part of the brain, and consequent waste of tissue, how enormous must be the labour of that organ with which we, in fact, do everything, even many of those acts whose final execution falls to the hands or feet! It is true: and to repair this excessive waste, the brain consumes the lion's share of the nourishment provided for the body. As we have already seen, fully a sixth or a fifth of all the blood in the body goes to repair the waste in the king's house; in other words, *new brain tissue* is being constantly formed at a startlingly rapid rate. One wonders at what age the child has no longer any part left of that brain which he was born with. The new tissue repeats the old, but not quite exactly. Just as a new muscular growth adapts itself to any new exercise required of it, so the new brain tissue is supposed to "grow to" any habit of thought in force during the time of growth—"thought" here including, of course, every exercise of mind and soul. "The cerebrum of man grows to the modes of thought in which it is habitually exercised," says an able physiologist, or, in the words of Dr. Carpenter, "Any sequence of mental action which has been frequently repeated, tends to perpetuate itself; so that we find ourselves automatically prompted to think, feel, or do what we have been before accustomed to think, feel, or do, under like circumstances, without any consciously formed purpose or anticipation of results. For there is no reason to regard the cerebrum as an exception to the general principle, that, whilst each part of the organism tends to form itself in accordance with the mode in which it is habitually exercised, this tendency will be specially strong in the nervous apparatus, in virtue of that incessant regeneration which is the very condition of its functional activity. It scarcely, indeed, admits of a doubt, that every state of ideational consciousness which is either very strong or is habitually repeated, leaves an organic impression on the cerebrum; in virtue of which the same state may be reproduced at any future time in correspondence to a suggestion fitted to excite it."

Fully as striking is Professor Huxley's mode of putting the case, though possibly, his standpoint is not identical with that of Dr. Carpenter. He says:—

"By the help of the brain we may acquire an infinity of artificial reflex actions, that is to say, an action may require all our attention and all our volition for its first, second, or third performance, but by frequent repetition it becomes, in a manner, part of our organization, and is performed without volition, or even consciousness."

"As every one knows, it takes a soldier a long time to learn his drill—for instance, to put himself into the attitude of 'attention' at the instant the word of command is heard. But, after a time, the sound of the word gives rise to the act, whether the soldier be thinking of it or not. There is a story, which is credible enough, though it may not be true, of a practical joker, who, seeing a discharged veteran carrying home his dinner, suddenly called out 'Attention!' and whereupon the man instantly brought his hands down, and lost his mutton and potatoes in the gutter. The drill had been thorough, and its effects had become embodied in the man's nervous structure."

"The possibility of all education (of which military drill is only one particular form), is based upon the existence of this power which the nervous system possesses, of organizing conscious actions into more or less unconscious, or reflex, operations. It may be laid down as a rule, that if any two mental states be called up together, or in succession, with due frequency and vividness, the subsequent production of

the one of them will suffice to call up the other, and that whether we desire it or not.

"The object of intellectual education is to create such indissoluble associations of our ideas of things, in the order and relation in which they occur in nature; that of a moral education is to unite as fixedly, the ideas of evil deeds with those of pain and degradation, and of good actions with those of pleasure and nobleness."

But it is the reflex action of matter upon mind which is more directly important to the educator—the idea which we have put broadly under the figure of a *rut*. Given, that the constant direction of the thoughts produce a corresponding set in the molecular currents of the brain, the thoughts must continue to go with those currents, *molens volens*, until stronger currents be set up.

What follows? Why, that the actual conformation of the child's brain depends upon the habits which the parents permit or encourage; and that the habits of the child produce the character of the man, because certain mental habitudes once set up, their nature is to go on for ever unless they should be displaced by stronger habits. Here's an end to the easy philosophy of, "It doesn't matter," "Oh, he'll grow out of it," "He'll know better by-and-by," "He's so little, what can we expect?" and so on. Every day, every hour, the parents are either passively or actively forming those habits in their children upon which, more than upon anything else, their future character and conduct depend.

And here comes in the consideration of outside influence. Nine times out of ten we begin to do a thing because we see some one else do it; we go on doing it, and—there is the habit! If it is so easy for ourselves to take up a new habit, it is tenfold as easy for the children: and here is the real difficulty in this matter of the education of habit. It is necessary that the mother be always on the *qui vive* to nip in the bud the bad habits her children may be in the act of picking up from servants or from other children.

#### The Forming of a Habit—"Shut the Door after you."

Except for this one drawback, the forming of habits in the children is no laborious task, for the reward goes hand in hand with the labour; so much so, that it is like the laying out of a penny with the certainty of the immediate return of a pound. For a habit is a delight in itself; poor human nature is conscious of the easement that it is to repeat the doing of anything without effort; and, therefore, the formation of a habit, the gradually lessening sense of effort, is pleasurable. This is one of the rocks that mothers sometimes split upon: they lose sight of the fact that a habit, even a good habit, becomes a real pleasure; and when the child has really formed the habit of doing a certain thing, his mother imagines that the effort is as great to him as at first, that it is a virtue in him to go on making this effort, and that he deserves, by way of reward, a little relaxation—she will let him break through the new habit a few times, and then go on again. But it is not going on, it is beginning again, and beginning in the face of obstacles. The "little relaxation" she allowed her child meant the forming of another, contrary habit, which must be overcome before the child gets back to where he was before. As a matter of fact, this misguided sympathy on the part of mothers is the one thing that makes it a laborious undertaking to train a child in good habits; for it is the nature of the child to take to habits as kindly as the infant takes to his mother's milk.

For example, and to choose a habit of no great consequence, except as a matter of consideration for others: the mother wishes her child to acquire the habit of shutting the door after him when he enters or leaves a room. Tact, watchfulness, and persistence are the qualities she must cultivate in herself, and, with these, she will be astonished at the readiness with which the child picks up the new habit. "Johnnie," she says, in a bright friendly voice, "I want you to remember something with all your might: never go into or out of a room in which anybody is sitting without shutting the door."

"But if I forget, mother?"

"I will try to remind you."

"But perhaps I shall be in a great hurry."

"You must always make time to do that."

"But why, mother?"

"Because it is not polite to the people in the room to make them uncomfortable."

"But if I am going out again that very minute?"

"All the same: shut the door when you come in; you can open it again to go out. Do you think you can remember?"

"I'll try, mother."

"Very well; I shall watch to see how few 'forgets' you make."

For two or three times Johnnie remembers; and then he is off like a shot and halfway downstairs before his mother has time to call him back. She does not cry out, "Johnnie, come back and shut the door!" because she knows that a summons of that kind is exasperating to big or little. She goes to the door, and calls pleasantly, "Johnnie!" Johnnie has forgotten all about the door; he wonders what his mother wants, and, stirred by curiosity, trots back, to find her seated and employed as before. She looks up with a smile, glances at the door, and says, "I said I should try to remind you." "Oh, I forgot," says Johnnie, put upon his honour; and he

shuts the door that time, and the next, and the next. But the little fellow really has not much power to recollect, and the mother will have to adopt various little devices to remind him; but of two things she will be careful—that he never slips off without shutting the door, and that she never lets the matter be a cause of friction between herself and the child, taking the line of his friendly ally to help him against that bad memory of his. By-and-by, after, say, twenty shuttings of the door with never an omission, the habit begins to be formed; Johnnie shuts the door as a matter of course, and his mother watches him, with delight, come into a room, shut the door, take something off the table, and go out, again shutting the door. Now that Johnnie always shuts the door, his mother's joy and triumph begin to be mixed with a little unreasonable pity. "Poor little fellow," she says to herself, "it is very good of him to take so much pains about a little thing, just because he is bid!" She thinks that, all the time, the child is making an effort for her sake; losing sight of the fact that the habit has become easy and natural, that, in fact, Johnnie shuts the door without knowing that he does so. Now comes the critical moment. Some day, Johnnie is so taken up with a new delight that the habit, not yet fully formed, loses its hold, and he is halfway downstairs before he thinks of the door. Then, he does think of it, with a little prick of conscience, strong enough not to send him back, but to make him pause a moment to see if his mother will call him back. She has noticed the omission, and is saying to herself, "Poor little fellow, he has been very good about it this long time; I'll let him off this once." He, outside, fails to hear his mother's call, says to himself—fatal sentence! "Oh, it doesn't matter," and trots off. Next time he leaves the door open, but it is not a "forget." His mother, still feeling like a merciful autocrat of all the Russias, calls him back in a rather feeble way. His quick ear catches the weakness of her tone, and, without coming back, he cries, "Oh, mother, I'm in such a hurry." And she says no more, but lets him off. Again, he rushes in, leaving the door wide open. "Johnnie!"—in a warning voice. "I'm going out again just in a minute, mother," and, after ten minutes rummaging, he does go out, and forgets to shut the door. The mother's mistimed easiness has lost for her every foot of the ground she had gained.

#### Infant "Habits."

(a) Cleanliness.—The whole group of habitudes, half physical and half moral, on which the propriety and comfort of everyday life depend, are received passively by the child; that is, he does very little to form these habits himself, but his brain receives impressions from what he sees about him; and these impressions take form as his own very strongest and most lasting habits.

Cleanliness, order, neatness, regularity, punctuality, are all branches of infant education. They should be about the child like the air he breathes, and he will take them in as unconsciously. It is hardly necessary to say a word about the necessity of delicate cleanliness in the nursery. The babies get a great deal of tubbing, and unlimited washing is done on their behalf; but, indeed, scrupulous as mothers of the cultured class are, a great deal rests with the nurses, and it needs much watchfulness to secure that there shall not be the faintest odour about the babies, or any of their belongings, and that the nurseries be kept sweet and thoroughly aired. One great difficulty is that the nurses belong to a class to which an open window is an abomination; and another is, they do not know the harm of smells; they cannot see a smell, and, therefore, it is not easy to persuade them that a smell is *matter*, microscopic particles which the child takes into him with every breath he draws. By the way, a very important bit of physical education for the child is to train in him a sensitive nose—a nose which sniffs out the least "stiffness" in a room, or the faintest odour attached to clothes or furniture. The sense of smell appears to have been given us mainly as a sort of danger signal to warn us of the presence of noxious matters; yet many people appear to go through the world without a nose at all: and the fact shows that a quick sense of smell is a matter of education and habit. The habit is easily formed. Encourage the children to notice whether the room they enter "smells" quite fresh when they come in out of the open air; to notice any drainage odours they come across in their walks; to observe the difference between the air of the town and the fresher air beyond; and, at the same time, train them to perceive the faintest of pleasant or harmless odours.

To return to the nursery. It would be a great thing if the nurse could be impressed with the notion that baby is *uncanny*, that he not only sees and knows everything, but will keep, for all his life, the mark of all he sees:—

"If there's a bit in a' your coats,  
I pray ye, tent it;  
A child's amang ye takin' notes,  
And, faith, he'll prent it!"

"Prent it" on his own active little brain, as a type for his future habits. Such a notion on the nurse's part might do something to secure cleanliness that goes beyond that of clean aprons. One or two little bits of tidiness that nurses affect are not to be commended on the score of cleanliness—the making up of the nursery beds early in the morning, and the folding up of the children's little garments when they

take them off at night. It would be well to stretch a line across the day nursery at night, and hang the little garments out for an airing, to get rid of the insensible perspiration they have been laden with during the day. For the same reason, the beds and bed-clothes should be turned down to air for a couple of hours before they are made up. The nursery table, if there is one, should be kept as scrupulously nice as that of the dining-room. The child who sits down to a crumpled or spotted table-cloth, or uses a discoloured metal spoon, is degraded—by that much. The children, too, should be encouraged to fastidious cleanliness in their own persons. One has seen the dainty baby-hand stretched out to be washed; it has got a smudge, and baby does not like it. May they be as fastidious when they are big enough to wash their own hands. *Not that they should be clean and presentable always*; children love to "mess about," and should have big pinafores for the purpose. They are all like that little French prince who scorned all his birthday presents and entreated to be allowed to make dear little mud pies with the little boy in the gutter. Let them make their mud pies freely; but, that over, they should be impatient to remove every trace of soil, and should do it themselves. Very little children may be taught to take care of their finger-nails, and to poke out the corners of eyes and ears. As for sitting down to table with unwashed hands and unbrushed hair, that, of course, no decent child is allowed to do. They should be early provided with their own little washing-gloves and flesh-brushes, and accustomed to find real pleasure in the bath, and in attending to themselves. There is no reason why a child of five or six should not make himself thoroughly clean without all that torture of soap in the eyes, and general pulling about, and poking which children hate, and no wonder. Besides, the child is not getting the habit of the daily bath until he can take it for himself, and it is important that this habit should be formed before the reckless era of school-life begins.

(b) Order.—What has been said about cleanliness applies as much to order—order in the nursery, and orderly habits in the nurse. One thing under this head: the nursery should not be made the hospital for the disabled or worn-out furniture of the house—cracked cups, chipped plates, jugs and teapots with fractured spouts should be banished. The children should be brought up to think that, once an article is made unsightly by soil or fracture it is spoiled, and must be replaced; and this rule will prove really economical, for when children and servants find that things no longer "do," after some careless injury, they learn to be careful. But, in any case, it is a real detriment to the children to grow up using imperfect and unsightly make-shifts. The pleasure grown-up people take in waiting on the children is really a fruitful source of mischief; for instance, in this matter of orderly habits, who does not know the litter the children leave to be cleared up after them a dozen times a day, in nursery, garden, drawing-room, wherever the restless little feet carry them? We are a bit sentimental about scattered toys and faded nosebags, and all the tokens of the children's presence; but the fact is, that this lawless habit of scattering should never have been allowed to grow upon the children. Everybody condemns the mother of a family whose drawers are chaotic, whose belongings are flung about needlessly; but at least some of the blame should be carried back to the mother. It is not as a woman that she has picked up a miserable habit which destroys the comfort, if not the happiness, of her home; the habit of disorder was allowed to grow upon her as a child, and her share of the blame is, that she has failed to cure herself. The child of two should be taught to get and to replace his playthings. Begin so early. Let it be a pleasure to him, part of his play, to open his cupboard, and put back "dolls" or "horses" each in its own niche. Let him *always* put away his things as a matter of course, and it is surprising how soon a habit of order is formed, which will make it pleasant to the child to put away after him, and irritating to him to see things in the wrong place. If parents would only see the morality of order, and that order in the nursery becomes scrupulousness in after life, and that the training necessary to form the habit is no more, comparatively, than the occasional winding of a clock, which ticks away then of its own accord and without any trouble to itself, surely more pains would be taken to cultivate this important habit.

(c) Neatness.—"Neatness" is akin to order, but is not quite the same thing: it implies, not only "a place for everything, and everything in its place," but everything in a suitable place, so as to produce a good effect; in fact, taste comes into play. The little girl must not only put her flowers in water, but arrange them prettily, and must not be put off with some rude kitchen mug or jug for them, or some hideous pink vase, but must have jar or vase graceful in form and harmonious in hue, though it may be but a cheap trifle. In the same way, everything in the nursery should be "neat"—that is, pleasing and suitable; and the children should be encouraged to make neat and effective arrangements of their own little belongings. Nothing vulgar in the way of print, picture-book, or toy should be admitted,—nothing to vitiate the child's taste or introduce a strain of commonness into his nature. On the other hand, it would be hard to estimate the refining elevating influence of one or two works of art, in however cheap a form—the little plaster casts one sees of Thorwaldsen's "Night" and "Mornings," for instance.

The importance of Regularity in infant education is beginning to be pretty generally acknowledged. The young mother knows that she must put baby to bed at the proper time, regardless of his cries, and leave him to cry himself to sleep two or three times, in order that, for the rest of his baby life, he may put himself sweetly to sleep in the dark without protest. But a good deal of nonsense is talked about the reason of baby's cries: he is supposed to want his mother, or his nurse, or his bottle, or the light, and to be "a knowing little fellow," according to his nurse, quite up to the fact that if he cries for these things he will get them. The fact is, the child has already formed a habit of wakefulness, or feeding at improper times, and he is as uneasy at his habit being broken in upon as the cat is at a change of habitation; when he submits happily to the new regulation, it is because the new habit is formed, and is, in its turn, the source of satisfaction. According to Dr. Carpenter, regularity should ever begin with infant life, as to times of feeding, repose, etc. The bodily habit thus formed greatly helps to shape the mental habit at a later period. On the other hand, nothing tends more to generate a habit of self-indulgence than to feed a child, or to allow it to remain out of bed, at unreasonable times, merely because it cries. It is wonderful how soon the actions of a young infant (like those of a young dog or horse) come into harmony with systematic training "judiciously exercised." The habit of regularity is as attractive to older children as to the infant. The days when the usual programme falls through are, one knows, the days when the children are apt to be naughty. For further details of physical training, a few hints are all I have left myself time for. In the first place, the everlasting "Don't," the *bête noir* of many a child's life,—"Don't shuffle," "Don't mumble,"—"Don't be so clumsy," "Don't be so awkward,"—is of no use at all. There is only one possible way of curing a bad habit: let the contrary good habit supplant it.

#### Physical Exercises, on English

The subject of the natural training of eye and muscles, was taken up pretty fully in the lecture on "Out-of-door Life." I will only add, that to give the child pleasure in light and easy motion—the sort of delight in the management of his "own body" that a good rider finds in managing his horse—dancing, drill, every kind of physical exercise will be found helpful. Swedish drill is especially valuable, and many of the exercises described in books on the subject are quite suitable for the nursery. Certain moral qualities come into play in alert movements, eye-to-eye attention, prompt and intelligent replies; but it often happens that good children fail in these points for want of physical training. Just let them go through the drill of good manners: let them rehearse little scenes in play,—*Mary, the lady asking the way to the market; Harry, the boy who directs her, and so on.* Let them go through a position drill—eyes right, hands still, heads up. They will invent a hundred situations, and the behaviour proper to each, and will treasure hints thrown in for their guidance. Encourage them to admire and take pride in light springing movements, and to eschew a heavy gait and clownish actions of the limbs.

The training of the ear and voice are exceedingly important parts of physical culture. Drill the children in pure vowel sounds, in the enunciation of final consonants; do not let them speak of "walkin'" and "talkin'," of a "fi-ne da-ay," "ni-ice bo-ys." Drill them in pronouncing difficult words—"imperturbability," "ipecacuanha," "tintinabulation,"—with sharp precision after a single hearing, in producing the several sounds of each vowel, and in the sounds of the consonants without attendant vowels. And French, taught orally, is exceedingly valuable as affording training for both ear and voice. As for a musical training, the subject is too important to come in at the tail-end of a lecture; but it would be hard to say how much what passes for inherited musical taste and ability is the result of the constant hearing and producing of musical sounds, the habit of music, that the child of musical people grows up with. Mr. Hullah maintained that the art of singing is entirely a trained habit—that every child may be, and should be, trained to sing. He even went so far as to say that the singing of the birds originated in the efforts of long-ago birds to imitate the human voice, and that, therefore, in forests and remote islands where there are no humans, the birds do not sing. Of course, transmitted habit must be taken into account, in the cases of both birds and men. It is a pity that the musical training most children get is of such a random character; that they are not trained, for instance, by carefully graduated ear and voice exercises, to produce and distinguish musical tones and intervals.

This subject of physical training is very inviting, but, unhappily, time will not allow us more than this hasty glance at a few of the habits it is worth while to cultivate in the children.

In conclusion, let me say that the education of habit is successful in so far as it enables the mother to let her children alone, not teasing them with perpetual commands and directions, perpetual *do's* and *don't's*, but letting them go their own way and grow, having first secured that they will go the right way, and grow to fruitful purpose. The gardener, it is true, "digs about and dungs," prunes and trains, his peach-tree: but that occupies a small fraction of the tree's life; all

why "peach tree" if you quote the A.T. Better stick to the fig tree.

the rest of the time, the sweet air and sunshine, the rains and dews, play about it and breathe upon it, get into its substance, and the result is—peaches. But let the gardener neglect his part, and the peaches will be no better than wind-sours, not pleasant to the eye, nor good for food.

*This which is a kind of apple we in the West always shell ourselves out. It is not at all a bad apple for its purpose, and it is pleasant to the eye.*

## LECTURE IV.

## SOME HABITS OF MIND—SOME MORAL HABITS.

ALLOW me to say once more, that I venture to speak upon subjects bearing on home education with the greatest deference to ~~parents~~ mothers; believing that, in virtue of their peculiar insight into the dispositions of their own children, they are blest with both knowledge and power in the management of them which lookers-on can only admire from afar. At the same time, there is such a thing as a science of education, that does not come by intuition, in the knowledge of which it is possible to bring up a child entirely according to natural law—which is also Divine law, in the keeping of which there is great reward.

We saw in the last lecture why Habit, for instance, is such a marvellous force in human life. I find this doctrine of habit very encouraging, as giving a scientific reasonableness to the conclusion already reached by common experience. It is pleasant to know that, even in mature life, it is possible by a little persistent effort to acquire a desirable habit. It is good, if not pleasant, to know also, with what fatal ease one can slip into bad habits. But the most comfortable thing in this view of habit is that it falls in with our natural love of an easy life. We are not unwilling to make efforts in the beginning, with the assurance that by-and-by things will go smoothly; and this is just what habit is, in an extraordinary degree, pledged to effect. The mother who takes pains to endow her children with good habits secures for herself smooth and easy days; while she who lets their habits take care of themselves, has a weary life of endless friction with the children. All day she is crying out, "Do this!" and they do it not; "Do that!" and they do the other. "But," you say, "if habit is so powerful, whether to hinder or to help the child, it is fatiguing to think of all the habits the poor mother must attend to. Is she never to be at ease with her children?"

Here, again, is an illustration of that fable of the anxious pendulum, overwhelmed with the thought of the number of ticks it must tick. But the ticks are to be delivered tick by tick, and there will always be a second of time to tick in. The mother devotes herself to the formation of one habit at a time, doing no more than keep watch over those already formed. If she be appalled by the thought of over-much labour, let her limit the number of good habits she will lay herself out to form. The child who starts in life with, say, twenty good habits, begins with a certain capital which he will lay out to endless profit as the years go on. The mother who is distrustful of her own power of steady effort may well take comfort in two facts. In the first place, she herself acquires the habit of training her children in a given habit, so that, by-and-by, it becomes, not only no trouble, but a pleasure to her. In the second place, the child's most fixed and dominant habits are those which the mother takes no pains about, but which the child picks up for himself through his close observation of all that is said and done, felt, and thought in his home.

We have already considered a group of half-physical habits—order, regularity, neatness—which the child imbibes, so to speak, in this way. But this is not all: habits of gentleness, courtesy, kindness, candour, respect for other people, or—habits quite other than these, are inspired by the child as the very atmosphere of his home, the air he lives in and must grow by.

## Habit of Attention.

Let us pass on, now, to the consideration of a group of mental habits which are affected by direct training rather than by example.

First, we put the habit of Attention, because the highest intellectual gifts depend for their value upon the measure in which their owner has cultivated the habit of attention. To explain why this habit is of such supreme importance, we must consider the operation of one or two of the laws of thought. But just recall, in the mean time, the fixity of attention with which the trained professional man—the lawyer, the doctor, the man of letters—listens to a round-about story, throws out the padding, seizes the facts, sees the bearing of every circumstance, and puts the case with new clearness and method; and contrast this with the wandering eye and malapropos replies of the imperfectly educated woman: and you see that, to differentials, people according to their power of attention is to employ a legitimate test.

To consider, then, the nature and the functions of attention. The mind—with the possible exceptions of the state of coma—is never idle; ideas are for ever passing through the brain, by day and by night, sleeping or waking, mad or sane. We take a great deal too much upon ourselves

*Why woman. Men are fresh as bad. "I am not denying that women are foolish, for God Almighty made em to match the men" Mr. Poyser.*

when we suppose that we are the conscious Ego in each of us, that ~~is~~ are the authors and intenders of the thoughts we think. The most we can do is to give direction to these trains of thought in the comparatively few moments when we are regulating the thoughts of our hearts. *(How ideas follow one another in a general way we see in dreams, the rapid dance of ideas through the brain during lighter sleep. In the wanderings of delirium, in the fancies of the mad, the inconsequent prattle of the child, and the babble of the old man we see the same thing, i.e. the law according to which ideas course through the mind when they are left to themselves. Talk to a child about glass—you wish to provoke a proper curiosity as to how glass is made and what are its uses. Not a bit of it; he wanders off to Cinderella's glass slipper; then he tells you about his godmother who gave him a boat; then about the ship in which uncle Harry went to America; then he wonders why you don't wear spectacles, leaving you to guess that uncle Harry did so. But the child's ramblings are not whimsical; they follow a law, the law of association of ideas, by which any idea presented to the mind recalls some other idea which has been at any time associated with it—as glass, and Cinderella's slipper; and that, again, some idea associated with it. Now this law of association of ideas is a good servant and a bad master. To have this aid in recalling the events of the past, the engagements of the present, is an infinite boon; but, to be at the mercy of associations, to have no power to think of what we choose when we choose, but only as something "puts it in our head," is to be no better than an imbecile.*

A vigorous effort of will should enable us, at any time, to fix our thoughts. Yes; but a vigorous self-compelling will is the flower of a developed character; and, while the child has no character to speak of, but only natural disposition, who is to keep humming-tops out of a geography lesson, or a doll's sofa out of a French verb? Here is the secret of the weariness of the home school-room—the children are thinking all the time about something else than their lessons; or, rather, they are at the mercy of the thousand fancies that flit through their brains, each in the train of the last. "Oh, Miss S.," said a little girl to her governess, "there are so many things more interesting than lessons to think about!"

Where is the harm? In this: not merely that the children are wasting time, though that is a pity; but they are forming a desultory habit of mind, and reducing their own capacity for mental effort.

Where is the help, then, if not in the will of the child? In the habit of attention, a habit to be cultivated even in the infant. Baby, notwithstanding his wonderful powers of observation, has no power of attention; in a minute, the coveted plaything drops from listless little fingers, and the wandering glance lights upon some new joy. But even at this stage the habit of attention may be trained; the discarded plaything is picked up, and, with "Pretty!" and dumb show, the mother keeps baby's eyes fixed for fully a couple of minutes—and this is his first "object-lesson." Later, as we have seen, the child is eager to see and handle every object that comes in his way. But watch him at his investigations: he flits from thing to thing with no more purpose than a butterfly amongst the flowers, staying at nothing long enough to get the good out of it. It is the mother's part to supplement the child's quick observing faculty with the habit of attention. She must see to it that he does not flit from this to that, but looks long enough at one thing to get a real acquaintance with it. Is little Margaret fixing round eyes on a daisy she has plucked? In a second, the daisy will be thrown away, and a pebble or a buttercup will charm the little maid. But the mother seizes the happy moment. She makes Margaret see that the daisy is a little bright yellow eye with white eyelashes all round it: that all the day long it lies there in the grass and looks up at the great sun, never blinking as Margaret would do, but keeping its eye wide open. And that is why it is called daisy, "day's eye," because its little eye is always looking at the sun which makes the day. And what does Margaret think it does at night, when there is no sun? It does what little boys and girls do; it just shuts up its eye with its white lashes all tipped with pink, and goes to sleep till the sun comes again in the morning. By this time the daisy has become very interesting to Margaret; she looks at it with big eyes after her mother has finished speaking, and then, very likely, cuddles it up to her breast or gives it a soft little kiss. In this way, the mother will invest every object in the child's world with interest and delight. But the tug of war begins with the lessons of the school-room. Even the child who has gained the habit of attention to things, finds words a weariness.

This is a turning-point in the child's life, and the moment for the mother's tact and vigilance. In the first place, never let the child dawdle over spelling-book or sum, sit dreaming with his book before him. When a child grows stupid over a lesson, it is time to put it away. Let him do another lesson as unlike the last as possible; and then go back with freshened wits to his unfinished task. If mother or governess have been unwary enough to let the child "moon" over a lesson, she must just exert her wits to pull him through; the lesson must be done, of course, but must be made bright and pleasant to the child.

The teacher should have some knowledge of the principles of education; should know what subjects are best fitted for the child considering his age, and how to make these subjects attractive; should know, too, how to vary the lessons, so that each faculty of the child's mind should rest after effort, and some other faculty be called into play. She should know how to incite the child to effort through his desire of approbation, of excelling, of advancing, his desire of knowledge, his love of his parents, his sense of duty, in such a way that no one set of motives be called unduly into play to the injury of the child's character.

We shall have opportunities to enter into some of these points later; meantime, let us look in at a home school-room managed upon sound principles. In the first place, there is a time-table, written out fairly, so that the child knows what he has to do and how long each lesson is to last. This idea of definite work to be finished in a given time is valuable to the child, not only as training him in habits of order, but in diligence; he learns that one time is not "as good as another;" that there is no right time left for what is not done in its own time; and this knowledge alone does a great deal to secure the child's attention to his work. Again, the lessons are short, seldom more than twenty minutes in length for children under eight; and this, for two or three reasons. The sense that there is not much time for his sums or his reading, keeps the child's wits on the alert and helps to fix his attention; he has time to learn just as much of any one subject as it is good for him to take in at once; and, if the lessons be judiciously alternated—sums first, say, while the brain is quite fresh; then writing, or reading—some more or less mechanical exercise, by way of a rest; and so on, the programme varying a little from day to day, but the same principle throughout—a "thinking" lesson first, and a "pains-taking" lesson to follow,—the child gets through his morning lessons without any sign of weariness.

## II.

## Marks and Rewards.

Even with regular lessons and short lessons, a further stimulus is necessary to secure the attention of the child. His desire of approbation asks the stimulus, not only of a word of praise, but of something in the shape of a reward to secure his utmost efforts. Now, rewards should be dealt out to the child upon principle; they should be the natural consequences of his good conduct. What is the natural consequence of work well and quickly done? Is it not the enjoyment of ample leisure? The boy is expected to do two right sums in twenty minutes: he does them in ten minutes; the remaining ten minutes are his own, fairly earned, in which he should be free for a scamper in the garden, or any delight he chooses. His writing task is to produce six perfect m's: he writes six lines with only one good m in each line, and the time for the writing lesson is over and he has none for himself; or, he is able to point out six good m's in his first line, and he has the rest of the time to draw steam-boats and railway trains. This possibility of letting the children occupy themselves variously in the few minutes they may gain at the end of each lesson, is perhaps the chief compensation which the home school-room offers for the zest which the sympathy of numbers, and emulation, give to school work.

As for emulation, a very potent means of exciting and holding the attention of the children, it is often objected that a desire to excel, to do better than others, implies an unloving temper, which the educator should rather repress than cultivate. Good marks of one kind or other are usually the rewards of those who do best, and it is urged that these good marks are often the cause of ungenerous rivalry. Now, the fact is, the children are being trained to live in the world, and in the world we all do get good marks of one kind or other, prize, or praise, or both, according as we excel others, whether in football or tennis, or in picture-painting or poem-making. There are envyings and heart-burnings amongst those who come in second best; so it has been from the beginning, and doubtless will be to the end. If the child is to go out into an emulous world, why, it may be well that he should be brought up in an emulous school. But here is where the mother's work comes in. She can teach her child to be first without vanity, and to be last without bitterness; that is, she can bring him up in such a hearty out-going of love and sympathy, that joy in his brother's success takes the sting out of his own failure, and regret for his brother's failure leaves no room for self-glorification. Again, if a system of marks be used as a stimulus to attention and effort, the good marks should be given for conduct rather than for cleverness, that is, they should be within everybody's reach: every child may get his mark for punctuality, order, attention, diligence, obedience, gentleness; and, therefore, marks of this kind may be given without danger of leaving a rankling sense of injustice in the breast of the child who fails. That he ought to work hard to please his parents who do so much for him, is a proper motive to bring before the child from time to time, but not too often; if the mother trade on her child's feelings, if, "Do this or that to please mamma," "Do not grieve poor mamma," etc., be brought too frequently before the child as the reason for rightdoing, a sentimental relation will be set up which both parent and child will find embarrassing, the true motives of action will be obscured, and

the child, unwilling to appear unloving, will end in being untrue. Of course, the most obvious means of quickening and holding the attention of the children lies in the attractiveness of knowledge itself, and in the real appetite for knowledge with which they are endowed. But how successful faulty teachers are in curing the children of any desire to know, is to be seen in many a nursery and school-room. The next lecture, however, will give opportunity for a few words on this subject. It is evident that attention is no faculty of the mind, indeed it is very doubtful how far the various operations of the mind should be described as "faculties" at all. Attention is hardly even an operation of the mind, but is simply the act by which the whole mental force is applied to the subject in hand. This act of bringing one's whole mind to bear, may be trained into a habit at the will of the parent or teacher who attracts and holds the child's attention by means of a variety of motives. As the child gets older, he is taught to bring his own will to bear; to make himself attend in spite of the most inviting suggestions from without. He should be taught to feel a certain triumph in compelling himself to fix his thoughts. Let him know what the real difficulty is, how it is the nature of his mind to be incessantly thinking, but how the thoughts, if left to themselves, will always run off from one thing to another, and that the struggle and the victory required of him is to fix his thoughts upon the task in hand. "You have done your duty," with a look of sympathy from his mother, is a reward for the child who has made this effort in the strength of his growing will.

It is impossible to overstate the importance of this habit of attention. It is, to quote words of weight, "within the reach of every one, and should be made the primary object of all mental discipline;" for, whatever the natural gifts of the child, it is only in so far as the habit of attention is cultivated in him that he is able to make use of them.

If it were only as it saves wear and tear, a perpetual tussle between duty and disinclination, it is worth while for the mother to lay herself out to secure that her child never does a lesson into which he does not put his heart. And that is no difficult undertaking; the thing is, to be no the watch from the beginning against the formation of the contrary habit of inattention. A great deal has been said lately about overpressure, and we have glanced at one or two of the causes whose effects go by this name. But, truly, one of the most fertile causes of an overdone brain is a failure in the habit of attention. I suppose we are all ready to admit that it is not the things we do, but the things we fail to do which fatigue us, with the sense of omission, with the worry of hurry in overtaking our tasks. And this is almost the only cause of failure in work in the case of the healthy schoolboy or schoolgirl: wandering wits hinder a lesson from being fully taken in at the right moment, and that lesson becomes a bugbear, continually wanted henceforth and never there; and the sense of loss tries the young scholar more than would the attentive reception of a dozen such lessons.

## The Schoolboy's Home-work.

In the matter of home-work, the parents may still be of great use to their boys and girls after they begin to go to school: not in helping them—that should not be necessary—but in this way: "Poor Annie does not finish her lessons till half-past nine; she really has so much to do;" "Poor Tom is at his books till ten o'clock; we never see anything of the children in the evening," say the distressed parents; and they let their children go on in a course which is absolutely ruinous both to bodily health and brain power. Now, the fault is very seldom in the lessons, but in the children; they moon over their books, and a little wholesome home-treatment will cure them of that ailment. Allow them, at the utmost, an hour and a half for their home-work; treat them tacitly as defaulters if they do not appear at the end of that time; do not be betrayed into word or look of sympathy; and the moment the time for lessons is over, let some delightful game or story-book be begun in the drawing-room. By-and-by they will find that it is possible to finish lessons in time to secure a pleasant evening afterwards, and the lessons will be much the better done for the fact that concentrated attention has been bestowed on them.

## The Discipline of Consequences.

In considering the means of securing attention, it has been necessary to refer to discipline—the dealing out of rewards and punishments—a subject which every type of a nursemaid or nursery governess feels herself very competent to handle. But this, too, has its scientific aspect: there is a law by which all rewards and punishments should be regulated: they should be the natural consequences of conduct; should imitate, as nearly as possible, the treatment which such and such conduct deserves and receives in after life. Miss Edgeworth, in her story of Rosamond, "The Purple Jar," hits the right principle, though the incident is rather extravagant. You may remember how Rosamond goes out walking with her mother, and has her fancy taken by a lovely purple jar in a chemist's window, which she entreats her mother to buy. The mother explains that the jar, on nearer view, would not please her, and that, if it is bought, she must go without a pair of new shoes, which she will soon want badly. Without a pair of new shoes, her mother yields, buys the jar, and Rosamond persists, her mother yields, buys the jar, and

*It is scarcely worth while to recapitulate so with Rosamond's story.*

order is it to be sent home. Poor Rosamond is *disillusioned*; the lovely purple colour is due to an evil-smelling liquid, to be got rid of at once, and all she has got is a colourless glass jar of inconvenient size and shape for her flowers. And now the want of the new shoes begins to press: she walks with pain and difficulty; she misses picnics and other delightful outings, until her mother considers that the money wasted on her little girl's want of common sense, forethought, and self-control is somehow made up. Now, little girls do not often fret for purple jars in chemists' windows; but that she should suffer for our wilfulness in getting what is unnecessary by doing without what is necessary is precisely one of the lessons of life we all have to learn, and therefore is the right sort of lesson to teach a child. It is evident that the right sort of rewards and punishments on this principle requires patient consideration and steady determination on the mother's part. She must consider with herself what fault of disposition the child's misbehaviour springs from; she must aim her punishment at that fault, and must brace herself to see her child suffer present loss for his lasting gain. Indeed, exceedingly little actual punishment is necessary where children are brought up with care. But this happens continually—the child who has done well gains some natural reward (like that ten minutes in the garden), which the child who has done less well forfeits, and the mother must brace herself and her child to bear this loss; if she equalizes the two children, she commits a serious wrong, not against the child who has done well, but against the defaulter, whom she deliberately encourages to repeat his shortcoming.

#### The Habits of Application, etc.

The habits of mental activity and of application are trained by the very means employed to cultivate that of attention. The child may *plod* diligently through his work who might be trained to *rapid* mental effort. The teacher herself must be alert, must expect instant answers, quick thought, rapid work. The tortoise will lag behind the hare, but the tortoise must be trained to move, every day, a trifle quicker. Aim steadily at securing quickness of apprehension and execution, and that goes far towards getting it.

So of application. The child must not be allowed to get into the mood in which he says, "Oh, I am so tired of sums," or "of history." His zeal must be stimulated; there must always be a pleasing vista before him; and steady, untiring application to work should be held up as honourable, while fitful, flagging attention and effort are scouted.

#### III.

##### The Habit of Thinking.

The actual labour of the brain is known to *psychologists* under various names, and divided into various operations: let us call it *thinking*, which, for educational purposes, is sufficiently exact; but, by "thinking," let us mean a real conscious effort of mind, and not the fancies that flit without effort through the brain. This sort of thing, for instance,—an example quoted by the Archbishop of York in his "Laws of Thought":—"When Captain Head was travelling across the pampas of South America, his guide one day suddenly stopped him and, pointing high into the air, cried out, 'A lion!' Surprised at such an exclamation, accompanied with such an act, he turned up his eyes, and with difficulty perceived, at an immeasurable height, a flight of condors, soaring in circles in a particular spot. Beneath this spot, far out of sight of himself or guide, lay the carcass of a horse, and over that carcass stood, as the guide well knew, a lion, whom the condors were eying with envy from their airy height. The signal of the birds was to him what the sight of the lion alone would have been to the traveller—a full assurance of its existence. Here was an act of thought which cost the thinker no trouble, which was as easy to him as to cast his eyes upward, yet which from us, unaccustomed to the subject, would require many steps and some labour. The sight of the condors convinced him that there was some carcass or other; but as they kept wheeling far above it, instead of swooping down to their feast, he guessed that some beast had anticipated them. Was it a dog, or a jackal? No; the condors would not fear to drive away, or share with, either; it must be some large beast, and, as there were lions in the neighbourhood, he concluded that one was here." And all these steps of thought are summed up in the words "A lion."

This is the sort of thing that the children should go through, more or less, in every lesson—a tracing of effect from cause, or of cause from effect; a comparing of things to find out wherein they are alike, and wherein they differ; a conclusion as to uses or consequences from certain premises.

##### The Habit of Imagining

All their lessons will afford scope for some slight exercise of the children's thinking power, some more and some less, and the lessons must be judiciously alternated so that the more mechanical efforts succeed the more strictly intellectual, and that the pleasing exercise of the imagination, again, succeeds efforts of reason. By the way, it is a pity when the sense of the ludicrous is cultivated in children's books at the expense of better things. "Alice in Wonderland" is a delicious feast of absurdities, which none of us, old or young, can afford to spare; but one doubts whether the child who reads

it has the delightful imaginings, the realizing of the unknown, with which *one used to read* "The Swiss Family Robinson."

This point is worth considering in connection with Christmas books for the little people. Books of comicallies cultivate no power but the sense of the incongruous; and though life is the more amusing for the possession of such a sense, when cultivated to excess it is apt to show itself in a flippant habit. "Diogenes and the Naughty Boys of Troy" is irresistible, but it is not the sort of thing the children will live over and over, and "play at" by the hour, as we have all played at Robinson Crusoe finding the footprints. They must have "funny books," but do not give the children too much nonsense-reading.

Stories, again, of the Christmas holidays of George and Lucy, of the amusements, foibles, and virtues of children in their own condition of life, leave nothing to the imagination. The children know all about everything so well, that it never occurs to them to play at the situations in any one of these tales, or even to read it twice over. But let them have tales of the imagination, scenes laid in other lands and other times, heroic adventures, hairbreadth escapes, delicious fairy tales in which they are never roughly pulled up by the impossible. And this, not for the children's amusement merely: it is not impossible that history may write us down as a generation blest with little imagination, and, by so far, the less capable of great conceptions and heroic efforts; for it is only as we have it in us to let a person or a cause fill the whole stage of the mind, to the exclusion of self-occupation, that we are capable of large-hearted actions on behalf of that person or cause. Our novelists say there is nothing left to imagine; and that, therefore, a realistic description of things as they are is all that is open to them. But imagination is nothing if not creative, unless it see not only what is apparent, but what is conceivable, and what is poetically fit in any circumstances. But imagination does not descend, well-grown, to take possession of an empty house; like every other power of the mind, it is the merest germ of a power to begin with, and grows by what it gets; and childhood, the age of faith, is the time for its nourishing. The children should have the joy of living in far lands, in other persons, in other times—a delightful double existence; and this joy they will find, for the most part, in their story-books. Their lessons, too, history and geography, should cultivate their conceptive powers. If the child do not live in the times of his history lesson, be not at home in the climes his geography book describes, why, these lessons have failed of their purpose. But let lessons do their best, and the picture-gallery of the imagination is poorly hung if the child has not found his way into the realms of fancy.

How the children's various lessons should be handled so as to induce habits of thinking, we shall consider later; but, this for the present: *thinking*, like writing or skating, comes by practice. The child who never has thought, never does think, and probably never will think; for are there not people enough who go through the world without any deliberate exercise of their own wits? The child must think, get at the reason-why of things for himself, every day of his life, and more each day than the day before. Children and parents both are given to invert this educational process. The child asks "Why?" and the parent answers, rather proud of this evidence of thought in his child. There is some slight show of speculation even in wondering "Why?" but it is the slightest and most superficial effort the thinking brain produces. Let the parent ask "Why?" and the child produce the answer, if he can. After he has turned the matter over and over in his mind, there is no harm in telling him—and he will remember it, the reason why. Every walk should offer some knotty problem for the children to think out—"Why does that leaf float on the water, and this pebble sink?" and so on.

##### The Habit of Remembering.

Memory is the storehouse of whatever knowledge we possess. It is upon the fact of the stores lodged in the memory that we take rank as intelligent beings. The children learn in order that they may remember. Much of what we have learned and experienced in childhood, and later, we cannot reproduce, and yet it has formed the groundwork of after-knowledge; later motions and opinions have grown out of what we once learned and knew. That is our sunk capital, of which we enjoy the interest though we are unable to realize. Again, much that we have learned and experienced is not only retained in the storehouse of memory, but is our available capital, we can reproduce, *recalled* upon demand. This memory which may be drawn upon by the act of recollection is our most valuable endowment. There is a third kind of spurious memory—facts and ideas floating in the brain which yet make no part of it, and are exuded at a single effort; as when a barrister produces all his knowledge of a case in his brief, and then *completely* forgets all about it; or when the school-boy "crams" for an examination, writes down what he has thus learned, and, behold, it is gone from his gaze for ever; as Ruskin puts it, "They cram to pass, and not to know; they do pass, and they don't know."

To say anything adequate on the subject of memory is impossible in the course of a lecture which skims over a dozen other subjects, each of which demands at least one hour

to itself; but let us try to answer two or three queries which present themselves on the surface. How do we come to "remember" at all? How do we gain the power to utilize remembered facts—that is, to *recalled*? And under what conditions is knowledge acquired that neither goes to the growth of brain and mind, nor is available on demand, but is lightly lodged in the brain for some short period, and is then evacuated at a single throw? You may remember being amused a few years ago by descriptions of a wonderful invention—an instrument which should record spoken words, and should deliver, say, a century hence, speech or lecture in the very words, and in the very tones of the speaker. Such an instrument is that function of the brain called memory, whereby the impressions received by the brain are recorded *mechanically*—at least, such is the theory pretty generally received now by physiologists. That is, the mind takes cognizance of certain facts, and the nerve substance of the brain records that cognizance. Now, the questions arise, Under what conditions is such an imprint of fact or event made upon the substance of the brain? Is the record permanent? And is the brain capable of receiving an indefinite number of such impressions? It appears, both from common experience and from an infinite number of examples quoted by psychologists, that any object or idea which is regarded with *attention*, makes the sort of impression on the brain which is said to fix it in the memory. In other words, give an instant undivided attention to anything whatsoever, and that thing will be remembered. In describing this effect, the common expression is accurate beyond its intention. We say, "Such and such a sight, or sound, or sensation, made a strong impression on me." And that is precisely what has happened: arrest the attention upon any fact or incident, and that fact or incident is remembered; it is impressed, imprinted upon the brain substance. The inference is plain. You want the child to remember? Then, secure his whole attention, the fixed gaze of his mind, as it were, upon the fact to be remembered; then he will have it: by a sort of photographic process, that fact or idea is "taken" by his brain, and, perhaps, when he is an old man, the memory of it will flash across him. But it is not enough to have a recollection flash across one incidentally; one wants to have the power of recalling at will: and, for this, something more is necessary than an occasional act of attention producing a solitary impression. Supposing, for instance, that by good teaching you secure the child's attention to the verb *avoir*, he will remember it; that is to say, some infinitely slight growth of brain tissue will record and retain that one French verb. But one verb is nothing; you want the child to learn French, and, for this, you must not only fix his attention upon each new lesson, but each must be so linked into the last that it is impossible for him to recall one without the other following in its train. The physical effect of such a method appears to be that each new growth of brain tissue is, so to speak, laid upon the last; that is, to put it half figuratively, a certain tract of the brain may be conceived of as being overlaid with French. This is to make a practical use of that law of association of ideas of which one would not willingly become the sport; and it is the neglect of this law which invalidates much good teaching. The teacher is content to produce a solitary impression which is only recalled as it is acted upon by a chance suggestion; whereas he should forge the links of a chain to draw his bucket out of the well. Probably you have heard, or heard of, a Dr. Pick, who has grounded a really philosophical system of mnemonics on these two principles of attention and association. Whatever we may think of his application of it, the principle he asserts is the right one. Let every lesson gain the child's entire attention, and let each new lesson be so interlaced with the last that the one must recall the other; that, again, recalls the one before it, that, the one before it, and so on to the beginning. But the "lightly come, lightly go" of a mere verbal memory follows no such rules. The child gets his exercise "by heart," says it off like a parrot, and, behold, it is gone; there is no record of it upon the brain at all. To secure such a record, there must be time, time for that full gaze of the mind we call *attention*, and for the growth of the brain tissue to the new idea. Given these conditions, there appears to be no limit of quantity to the recording power of the brain. Except in this way: a girl learns French, and speaks it fairly well; by the time she is a grandmother she has forgotten it entirely, has not a word left. When this is the case, her French has been disused; she has not been in the habit of reading, hearing, or speaking French from youth to age. Whereby it is evident that, to secure right of way to that record of French imprinted on her brain, the path should have been kept open by frequent goings and comings. To acquire any knowledge or power whatsoever, and then to leave it to grow rusty in a neglected corner of the brain, is practically useless. Where there is no chain of association to draw the bucket out of the well, it is all the same as if there were no water there. As to how to form these links, every subject will suggest a suitable method. The child has a lesson about Switzerland to-day, and one about Holland to-morrow, and the one is linked to the other by the very fact that the two countries have hardly anything in common; what the one has, the other has not. Again, the association will be of *similarity*, and not of *contrast*. In our own experience we find that colours, places, sounds, odours recall persons or

events; but links of this sensuous order can hardly be employed in education. The link between any two things must be found in the nature of the things associated.

##### The Habit of Perfect Execution.

"Throw perfection into all you do" is a counsel upon which a family may be brought up with great advantage. We English, as a nation, think too much of persons, and too little of things, work, execution. Our children are allowed to make their figures, or their letters, their stitches, their dolls' clothes, their small carpentry, anyhow, with the notion that they will do better by-and-by. Other nations—the Germans and the French, for instance—look at the question philosophically, and know that if the children get the habit of turning out imperfect work, the men and women will undoubtedly keep that habit up. I remember being delighted with the work of a class of about forty children, of six and seven, in an elementary school at Heidelberg. They were doing a writing lesson, accompanied by a good deal of oral teaching from a master who wrote each word on the blackboard. By-and-by the slates were shown, and I did not observe one faulty or irregular letter on the whole forty slates. The same principle of "perfection" was to be seen in the recent exhibitions of school-work held throughout France. No faulty work was shown, to be excused on the plea that it was the work of children.

No work should be given to a child that he cannot execute perfectly, and then perfection should be required of him as a matter of course. For instance, he is set to do a copy of strokes, and is allowed to show a slateful of all sorts of slopes and all sorts of intervals: his moral sense is vitiated, his eye is injured. Set him six strokes to copy; let him not bring a slateful, but six perfect strokes, at regular distances and at regular slopes. If he produces a faulty pair, get him to point out the fault, and persevere until he has produced his task; if he does not do it to-day, let him go on to-morrow and the next day, and when the six perfect strokes appear, let it be an occasion of triumph. So with the little tasks of painting, drawing, or construction he sets himself—let everything he does be *well done*. An unsteady house of cards is a thing to be ashamed of. Closely connected with this habit of "perfect work" is that of finishing whatever is taken in hand. The child should never be allowed to set his hand to a new undertaking until the last is finished.

#### IV.

##### Some Moral Habits.

It is disappointing that, in order to cover the ground at all, we must treat those Moral Habits, which the mother owes it to her children to cultivate in them, in a slight and inadequate way; but the point to be borne in mind is that all that has been already said about the cultivation of habit applies with the greatest possible force to each of these habits.

(a) *Obedience*.—First, and infinitely the most important, is the habit of obedience. Indeed, obedience is the whole duty of the child, and for this reason—every other duty of the child is fulfilled as a matter of obedience to his parents. Not only so: obedience is the whole duty of man—obedience to conscience, to law, to Divine direction. It has been well observed that each of the three recorded temptations of our Lord in the wilderness is a suggestion, not of an act of overt sin, but of an act of *unfulness*—that state directly opposed to obedience, and out of which springs all that foolishness which is bound up in the heart of a child. Now, if the parent realize that obedience is no mere accidental duty, the fulfilling of which is a matter that lies between himself and the child, but that he is the appointed agent to train the child up to the intelligent obedience of the self-compelling law-abiding human being, he will see that he has no right to *forego* the obedience of his child, that every act of disobedience in the child is a direct condemnation of the parent. Also he will see that the motive to the child's obedience is not the arbitrary one of, "Do this, or that, because I have said so," but the motive of the apostolic injunction, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." It is only in proportion as the will of the child is in the act of obedience, that he obeys because his sense of right makes him *desire* to obey in spite of temptations to disobedience, not of constraint, but willingly, that that habit has been formed which will, hereafter, enable the child to use the strength of his will against his inclinations when these prompt him to lawless courses. It is said that the children of parents who are most strict in exacting obedience often turn out ill, and that orphans and other poor little waifs brought up under strict discipline only wait their opportunity to break out into licence. Exactly so; because, in these cases, there is no gradual training of the child in the habit of obedience, no gradual enlisting of his will on the side of sweet service and a freewill offering of submission to the highest law: the poor children are simply bullied into submission to the will, that is, the *unfulness*, of another; not at all, "for it is right;" only because it is convenient.

The mother has no more sacred duty than that of training her infant to instant obedience. To do so is no difficult task; the child is still "trailing clouds of glory from God, who is his home;" the principle of obedience is within him, waiting to be called into exercise. There is no need to rate the child, or threaten him, or use any manner of violence; because the

English  
I dare say you  
are right, but  
I do not  
remember the  
end well  
in the story,  
or the  
flowers.

Why not 'he reads'  
I trust the book is  
the real by children.

But all is impossible,  
and they know it  
and get to hate it, as  
in theology. "Hedo  
Gua in possible".

24.  
will fail

24. and

of  
of  
of  
of

This is to be taken  
out of the lecture form.

Yes, but it must be remembered that  
the art of dismissing from memory is an  
unfused one and to be cultivated as  
of a barrister, Physician, after the case is over, Butcher, etc.

See books they expect so.

parent is invested with authority which the child intuitively recognizes. It is enough to say, "Do this," in a quiet authoritative tone, and *expect it to be done*. The mother often enough loses her hold over her children because they detect in the tone of her voice that she does not expect them to obey her behests; she does not think enough of her position; has her great stronghold in the habit of obedience. If she begins by requiring that her children always obey her, why, they will always do so as a matter of course; but let them once get the thin end of the wedge in, let them discover that they can do otherwise than obey, and a woful struggle begins, which commonly ends in the children doing that which is right in their own eyes. This is the sort of thing which is fatal: The children are in the drawing-room, and a caller is announced. "You must go upstairs now." "Oh, mother, dear, do let us stay in the window-corner; we will be as quiet as mice!" The mother is rather proud of her children's pretty manners, and they stay. They are not quiet, of course; but that is the least of the evils—they have succeeded in doing as they chose and not as they were bid, and they will not put their necks under the yoke again without a struggle. It is in little matters that the mother is worsted, "Bed-time, Willie!" "Oh, mamma, just let me finish this;" and the mother yields, forgetting that the case in point is of no consequence—the thing that matters is that the child should be daily confirming a habit of obedience by the unbroken repetition of acts of obedience. It is astonishing how clever the child is in finding ways of evading the spirit while he observes the letter. "Mary, come in." "Yes, mamma;" but her mother calls four times before Mary comes. "Put away your bricks;" and the bricks are put away with slow, reluctant fingers. "You must always wash your hands when you hear the first bell." The child obeys for that once and no more. To avoid these displays of wilfulness, the mother will insist from the first on an obedience which is prompt, cheerful, and lasting—save for lapses of memory on the child's part. Tardy, unwilling, occasional obedience is hardly worth the having; and it is greatly easier to give the child the habit of perfect obedience by never allowing him in anything else, than it is to obtain this merely formal obedience by a constant exercise of authority. By-and-by, when he is old enough, take the child into confidence; let him know what a noble thing it is to be able to make himself do, in a minute, and brightly, the very thing he would rather not do. To secure this habit of obedience, the mother must exercise great self-restraint; she must never give a command which she does not intend to see carried out to the full. And she must not lay upon her children burdens grievous to be borne, of command heaped upon command. The children who are trained to perfect obedience may be trusted with a good deal of liberty; they receive a few directions which they know they must not disobey; and, for the rest, they are left to learn how to direct their own actions, even at the cost of some small mishaps, and are not pestered with a perpetual fire of "Do this," and "Don't do that!"

(b) Truthfulness.—Of the duty of truthfulness it is unnecessary to say a word, but the training of the child in the habit of strict veracity is another matter, and one which requires delicate care and scrupulousness on the part of the mother. The vice of lying arises from three causes: carelessness in ascertaining the truth, carelessness in stating the truth, and a deliberate intention to deceive. That all three are vicious is evident from the fact that a man's character may be ruined by what is no more than a careless misstatement on the part of another: the speaker repeats a damaging remark without taking the trouble to sift it; or he repeats what he has heard or seen with so little care to deliver the truth that his statement becomes no better than a lie. Now, of the three kinds of lying, it is only, as a matter of fact, the third which is severely visited upon the child; the first and the second he is allowed in. He tells you he has seen "lois" of spotted dogs in the town—he has really seen two; that "all the boys" are collecting crests—he knows of three who are doing so; that "everybody" says Jones is a sneak—the fact is he has heard Brown say so. These departures from strict veracity are on matters of such slight importance that the mother is apt to let them pass as the "children's chatter;" but, indeed, every such lapse is damaging to the child's sense of truth—a blade which easily loses its keenness of edge. The mother who trains her child to strict accuracy of statement about things small and great fortifies him against temptations to the grosser forms of lying; he will not readily colour a tale to his own advantage, suppress facts, equivocate, when the statement of the simple fact has become a binding habit, and when he has not been allowed to form the contrary vicious habit of playing fast and loose with words. Two forms of prevarication, very tempting to the child, will require great vigilance on the mother's part—that of exaggeration and that of clothing a story with ludicrous embellishments. However funny a circumstance may be as described by the child, the ruthless mother must strip the tale of everything over and above the naked truth: for, indeed, a reputation for facetiousness is dearly purchased by the loss of that dignity of character in child and man which accompanies the habit of strict veracity.

Of reverence, consideration for others, respect for persons and property, I have time to say no more than urge the

importance of a sedulous cultivation of these moral qualities—the distinguishing marks of a refined nature—until they become the daily *habits* of the child's life; and the more, because a self-assertive, aggressive, self-seeking temper is but too characteristic of the times we live in.

(c) Sweet Temper.—Of the habit of sweet temper I am anxious to say a few words. It is very customary to regard temper as constitutional, that which is born in you and is neither to be helped nor hindered. "Oh, she is a good-tempered little soul; nothing puts her out!" "Oh, he has his father's temper; the least thing that goes contrary makes him fly into a passion," are the sorts of remarks one hears constantly. It is, no doubt, true that the children inherit a certain tendency to irascibility or to amiability, to fretfulness, discontentment, peevishness, sullenness, murmuring, and impatience; or to cheerfulness, trustfulness, good-humour, patience, and humility. It is also true that upon the preponderance of any of these qualities—upon temper, that is—the happiness or wretchedness of child and man depends, as well as the comfort or misery of the people who live with him. We all know people possessed of integrity and of many excellent virtues who make themselves intolerable to their belongings. The root of the evil is, not that these people were born sullen, or peevish, or envious—that might have been mended; but that they were permitted to grow up in these dispositions. Here, if anywhere, the power of habit is invaluable: it rests with the parents to correct the original twist, all the more so if it is from them the child gets it, and to send their child into the world blest with an even happy temper, inclined to make the best of things, to look on the bright side, to impart the best and kindest motives to others, and to make no extravagant claims on his own account—fertile source of ugly tempers. And this, because the child is born with no more than certain tendencies. It is by force of habit that a tendency becomes a temper, and it rests with the mother to hinder the formation of ill-temper, to force that of good tempers. Nor is it difficult to do this while the child's countenance is as an open book to his mother, and she reads the thoughts of his heart before he is aware of them himself. Remembering that every envious, murmuring, discontented thought leaves a track in the very substance of the child's brain for such thoughts to run in again and again—that this track, this rut is ever widening and deepening with the traffic in ugly thoughts—the mother's care is to hinder at the outset the formation of any such track. She sees into her child's soul—sees the evil temper in the act of rising; now is her opportunity. Let her change the child's thoughts before ever the bad temper has had time to develop into conscious feeling, much less act: take him out of doors, send him to fetch or carry, tell him or show him something of interest—in a word, give him something else to think about; but all in a natural way, and without letting the child perceive that he is being treated. As every fit of sullenness leaves place in the child's mind for another fit of sullenness to succeed it, so every such fit availed by the mother's tact tends to obliterate the evil traces of former sullen tempers. At the same time, the mother is careful to lay down a highway for the free course of all sweet and genial thoughts and feelings.

You will perceive, ladies, that I have been offering suggestions, not for a course of intellectual and moral training, but only for the formation of certain habits which should be, as it were, the outworks of character. Even with this limited programme, I have left unnoticed many matters fully as important as those touched upon. In the presence of an embarrassment of riches, it has been necessary to adopt some principle of selection; and I have thought it well to dwell upon considerations which do not appear to me to have their full weight with educated parents, rather than upon those which every thoughtful person recognizes the force of.

## LECTURE V.

## LESSONS AS INSTRUMENTS OF EDUCATION.

It seems to me that we live in an age of pedagogy; that we of the teaching profession are inclined to take too much upon ourselves, and that parents are ready to yield the responsibility of direction, as well as of actual instruction, more than is wholesome for the children. I am about, today, to invite your attention to a subject that mothers are accustomed to leave very much in the hands of schoolmaster or governess when they do not instruct their children themselves—I mean the choice of subjects of instruction, and the way of handling those subjects. Teachers are the people who have, more than others, given themselves to the consideration of what a child should learn and how he should learn it; but the parent, also, should have thought out this subject, and, even when he does not profess to teach his children, should have his own carefully formed opinions as to the subject-matter and the method of their intellectual education; and this, for the sake of the teacher as well as for that of the children. Nothing does more to give vitality and purpose to the work of the teacher than the certainty that the parents of his pupils go with him.

Even when children go to schools taught by qualified persons, some insight on the part of fathers and mothers is useful as hindering the teacher from dropping into professional grooves, valuing proficiency in this or that subject for its own sake, and not as it affects the children. But in the early days of the home school-room, it is iniquitous to leave the young governess, with little qualification beyond her native French or German, or scanty English, to chalk out a course for herself and her charges. That the children waste their time is the least of the evils that accrue: they are forming habits dead against intellectual effort; and, by-and-by, when they go to school, the lessons go over their heads, the work slips through their fingers, and their powers of passive resistance baffle the most strenuous teachers.

All the same, whatever be the advantages of kindergarten or other schools for little children, the home school-room ought to be the best growing-ground for the child, say, until he enters on his ninth year. And, doubtless, it would be so, were the mother at liberty to devote herself to the instruction of her children: but this she is seldom free to do; she must have a governess, and the difficulty is to get a woman who is not only acquainted with the subjects she undertakes to teach, but who understands in some measure the nature of the child and the art and objects of education—a woman capable of making the very most of the children without waste of power or of time. Such a *rara avis* does not present herself in answer to every advertisement, and, in default, the mother must undertake to train her governess, that is, she may supplement with her own insight the scanty knowledge and experience of the young teacher. "I wish the children to be taught to read, thus and thus, because—" or, "to learn history in such a way, that the lessons may have such and such effects." Half an hour's talk of this kind with a sensible governess, will secure a whole month's work for the children so well directed, that much is done in little time, and the widest possible margin secured for play and open-air exercise.

But if the mother is to inoculate the governess with her views as to the teaching of writing, French, geography, she must, herself, have definite views. She must ask herself seriously, *Why must the children learn at all? What should they learn? And, how should they learn it?* If she take the trouble to find a definite and thoughtful answer to each of these three queries, she will be in a position to direct her children's studies; and will, at the same time, be surprised to find that three-fourths of the time and labour ordinarily spent by the child at his lessons is lost time and wasted energy.

Why must the child learn? Why do we eat? Is it not in order that the body may live and grow and be able to fulfil its functions? Precisely so, the mind must be sustained and developed by means of the food convenient for it, the mental *pabulum* of assimilated knowledge. Again, the body is developed, not only by means of proper sustenance, but by the appropriate exercise of each of its members. A young mother remarked the other day, that, before her marriage, she had such slender arms she never liked to exhibit them; but a strong five-month's old baby had cured her of that; she could toss and lift him with ease, and could now show well-rounded arms with anybody; and just as the limbs grow strong with exercise, so does intellectual effort with a given faculty of the mind make that faculty vigorous and capable. People are apt to overlook the fact that *mind* must have its aliment—we learn that we may know, not that we may grow; hence the parrot-like saying of lessons, the cramming of ill-digested facts for examinations, all the ways of taking in knowledge which the mind does not assimilate. Specialists, on the other hand, are apt to attach too much importance to the several exercise of the mental faculties. *One* comes across books on teaching, with lessons elaborately drawn up, in which certain work is assigned to the perceptive faculties, certain work to the imagination, to the judgment, and so on. This sort of doctoring of the materials of knowledge is unnecessary for the healthy child, whose mind is capable of self-direction, and of applying each faculty to its proper work upon the parcel of knowledge delivered to it. At this early stage, the subjects of instruction matter far less than the methods of teaching: almost any subject which common sense points out as suitable for the instruction of children will afford exercise for all their powers, if properly presented.

The child must learn, in the second place, in order that ideas may be freely sown in the fruitful soil of his mind. "Idea, the image or picture formed by the mind of anything external, whether sensible or spiritual,"—so, the dictionary: therefore, if the business of teaching be to furnish the child with ideas, any teaching which does not leave him possessed of a new mental image has, by so far, missed its mark. Now, just think of the listless way in which the children too often drag through reading and tables, geography and sums, and you will see that it is a rare thing for any part of any lesson to flash upon them with the vividness which leaves a mental picture behind. It is not too much to say that a morning in which the child receives no new idea is a morning wasted, however closely the little student has been kept at his books.

For the dictionary appears to me to fall short of the truth in its definition of the term *idea*. An idea is more than an image or a picture; it is, so to speak, a spiritual germ endowed with vital force—with power, that is, to grow

and to produce after its kind. It is the very nature of an idea to grow: as the vegetable germ secretes that it lives by, so, fairly implant an idea in the child's mind, and it will secrete its own food, grow, and bear fruit in the form of a succession of kindred ideas. We know from our own experience, that, let our attention be forcibly drawn to some public character, some startling theory, and, for days after, we are continually hearing or reading matter which bears on this one subject; just as if all the world were thinking about what occupies our thoughts: the fact being, that the new idea we have received is in the act of growth, and is reaching out after its appropriate food. This process of feeding goes on with even more avidity in childhood, and the growth of an idea in the child is proportionately rapid.

Scott got an idea, a whole group of ideas, out of the Border tales and ballads, the folk-lore of the country side, on which his boyhood was nourished: his ideas grew, and brought forth, and the Waverley novels were the fruit they bore. George Stephenson made little clay engines with his playmate, Thomas Tholoway; by-and-by, when he was an engine-man, he was always watching his engine, cleaning it, studying it; an engine was his dominant idea, and it developed into no less a thing than the locomotive.

But how does this theory of the vital and fruitful character of ideas bear upon the education of the child? In this way: give your child a single valuable idea and you have done more for his education than if you had laid upon his mind the burden of bushels of information: for the child who grows up with a few dominant ideas has his self-education provided for, his career marked out.

In order for the reception of an idea, the mind must be in an attitude of eager attention, and how to secure that state we have considered elsewhere. One thing more: a single idea may be a possession so precious in itself, so fruitful, that the parent cannot fitly allow the child's selection of ideas to be a matter of chance; for the child who grows up with a few dominant ideas has his self-education provided for, his career marked out.

But it is not only to secure due intellectual growth and the furnishing of his mind with ideas, that the child must learn: the common notion—that he learns for the sake of getting knowledge—is also a true one; so much so, that no knowledge should be so precious as that gained in childhood, no later knowledge should be so clearly chronicled on the brain, nor so useful as the foundation of that to follow. At the same time, the child's capacity for knowledge is very limited; his mind is, after all, but a little phial with a narrow neck; and, therefore, it behoves parent or teacher to pour in only of the best. But, poor children, they are too often badly used by their best friends in the matter of the sort of knowledge offered them. *Grown-up people who are not mothers talk and think far more childishly than the child does in their efforts to approach his mind. If a child talk twaddle, it is because his elders are in the habit of talking twaddle to him; leave him to himself, and his remarks are wise and sensible as far as his small experience guides him. Mothers seldom talk down to their children; they are too intimate with the little people, and have, therefore, too much respect for them: but professional teachers, whether the writers of books or the givers of lessons, are too apt to present a single drop of pure knowledge in a whole gallon of twaddle, imposing upon the child the labour of discerning the drop and of extracting it from the worthless flood. On the whole, the children who grow up amongst their elders and are not provided with what are called children's books at all fare all the better on what they are able to glean for themselves from the literature of grown-up people. Thus, of Dr. Arnold it is told that, when he was three years old, he received a present from his father of Smollett's "History of England," as a reward for the accuracy with which he went through the stories connected with the portraits and pictures of the successive reigns—an amusement which probably laid the foundation of the great love for history which distinguished him in after life. When occupying the professional chair at Oxford, he made quotations, we are told, from Dr. Priestley's "Lectures on History,"—verbally accurate quotations, we may believe,—and that, though he had not had the book in his hands since he was a child of eight. No doubt he was an exceptional child; and all I maintain is, that had his reading been the sort of diluted twaddle which is thrust upon children, it would have been impossible for him to cite passages a week, much less a score or so of years, after the reading. This sort of weak literature for the children, both in story and lesson books, is the result of a reactionary process. Not so long ago, the current impression was that the children had little understanding but prodigious memory for facts; dates, numbers, rules, catechisms of knowledge, much information in small parcels, was supposed to be the fitting material for a child's education. We have changed all that, and put into the children's hands lesson-books with pretty pictures and easy talk, almost as good as story-books; but we do not see that, after all, we are but giving the same little pills of knowledge in the form of a weak and copious solution. Teachers, and even parents who are careful enough about their children's diet, are so reckless as to the sort of mental aliment offered to them, that I am exceedingly anxious to secure your consideration for this of the lessons and literature proper for the little people.*

We see, then, that the children's lessons should provide

Lecture form. These involution sentences are not good. Very few good writers are involution and always rarely, and when there are some

Though 'one' is often used it is certainly not good English, but a bad following of the good French and German 'on' and 'man'.

talk

and

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material for their mental growth, should exercise the several faculties of their minds, should furnish them with fruitful ideas, and should afford them knowledge, really valuable for its own sake, accurate and interesting, of the kind that the child may recall as a man with profit and pleasure. Before applying these tests to the various subjects in which children are commonly interested, may I remind you of two or three points which I have endeavoured to establish in the former lectures:—

That the knowledge most valuable to the child is that which he gets with his own eyes and ears and fingers (under direction) in the open air.

That the claims of the school-room should not be allowed to encroach on the child's right to long hours daily for exercise and investigation.

That the child should be taken daily, if possible, to scenes—moor or meadow, common or shore—where he may find new things to examine, and so add to his store of real knowledge. That the child's observation should be directed to flower or boulder, bird or tree; that, in fact, he should be employed in gathering the common information which is the basis of scientific knowledge.

That play, vigorous healthful play, is, in its turn, fully as important as lessons, as regards both bodily health and brain-power.

That the child, though under supervision, should be left much to himself—both, that he may go to work in his own way on the ideas he receives, and, also, that he may be the more open to natural influences.

That the happiness of the child is the condition of his progress; that his lessons should be made joyous, and that occasions of friction in the school-room are greatly to be avoided.

Premising so much, may I now invite your attention to our subject for to-day: What the children should learn, and how they should be taught.

#### Kindergarten, Games, and Occupations.

It is hardly necessary, here, to discuss the merits of the kindergarten school. The success of such a school demands rare qualities in the teacher—high culture, some knowledge of psychology, of the art of education; intense sympathy with the children, much tact, much common sense, much common information, much "joyousness of nature," and much governing power;—in a word, the kindergarten method is nicely contrived to bring the child *en rapport* with a superior intelligence. Given such a superior being to conduct it, and the kindergarten is beautiful—"tis like a little heaven below;" but, put a commonplace woman in charge of such a school, and the charmingly devised gifts and games, and occupations become so many instruments of wooden teaching. If the very essence of the kindergarten method is personal influence, a sort of spiritual mesmerism, it follows that the mother is naturally the best *kindergartner*, for who so likely as she to have the useful tact, sympathy, common sense, culture?

Though every mother should be a *kindergartner* in the sense in which Froebel employs the term, it does not follow that every nursery should be a regularly organized kindergarten. Indeed, the machinery of the kindergarten is no more than a device to insure the carrying out of certain educational principles, and these it is the mother's business to get at, and work out according to Froebel's method—or her own. For instance, in the kindergarten, the child's senses are carefully and progressively trained: he looks, listens, learns by touch; gets ideas of size, colour, form, number; is taught to copy faithfully, express exactly. And in this training of the senses, the child is made to pursue the method the infant shapes for itself in his early studies of ring or bell. But it is possible that the child's marvellous power of obtaining knowledge by means of his senses is undervalued; that the field is too circumscribed; and that, during the first six or seven years in which he might have become intimately acquainted with the properties and natural history of every natural object within his reach, he has obtained exact ideas, it is true—can distinguish a rhomboid from a pentagon, a primary from a secondary colour, has learned to see so truly that he can copy what he sees in folded paper or woven straw,—but this, at the expense of much of that *real knowledge* of the external world which at no time of his life will be so fitted to acquire. Therefore, while the exact training of the kindergarten is greatly to be coveted, the mother will endeavour to give it by the way, and will by no means let it stand for that wider training of the senses, to secure which for her children is a primary duty.

Again, in the kindergarten, the child is set to such tasks only as he is competent to perform, and then, whatever he has to do, he is expected to do *perfectly*. I have seen a four-year old child blush and look as self-condemned, because he had folded a slip of paper irregularly, as if found out in a falsehood. That was under the training of Fraulein Heerwart—a beautiful thing to behold. Froebel's "Occupations" afford capital opportunities for training in this kind of faithfulness, and are the greatest boon in this kind of schools; but in the home a thousand such opportunities occur, if only in such trifles as the straightening of a table-cover, or of a picture, the hanging of a towel, the packing of a parcel—every thoughtful mother invents a thousand ways of training in her child a just eye and a faithful

hand. Nevertheless, as a means of methodical training, as well as of happy employment, the introduction of the games and occupations of the kindergarten into the nursery cannot be too strongly recommended; provided that the mother does not depend upon these, but makes all the child's occupations subserve the purposes of his education.

In the kindergarten the child breathes an atmosphere of "sweetness and light." You see the sturdy urchin of five stiffen his back and decline to be a jumping frog, and the *kindergartner* comes with unruffled gentleness, takes him by the hand, and leads him out of the circle,—he is not treated as an offender, only he does not choose to do as others do, therefore he is not wanted there: the next time, he is quite content to be a frog. Here we have the principle for the discipline of the nursery. Do not treat the child's small contumacy too seriously; do not assume that he is being naughty: just leave him out when he is not prepared to act in harmony with the rest. Avoid friction; and, above all, do not let him disturb the moral atmosphere: in all gentleness and serenity, remove him from the company of the others, when he is being what nurses call "tiresome."

Once more, the kindergarten takes account of the joyousness of the child's nature: he is allowed full and free expression for the glees that are in him, without the "rampaging" which follows if he is left to himself to find an outlet for his exuberant life. This union of joy and gentleness is the very temper to be cultivated in the nursery. The boisterous behaviour sometimes allowed in the children is unnecessary—within doors at any rate; but even a momentary absence of sunshine on the faces of her children will be a graver cause of uneasiness to the mother. On the whole, we may say that the principles which should govern kindergarten teaching are precisely those in which every thoughtful mother endeavours to bring up her family; while the practices of the kindergarten, being only one way amongst others of carrying out these principles, may be adopted so far as they fit in conveniently with the mother's general scheme for the education of her family.

To consider, now, the subjects which lend themselves most readily to the education of the child:—

#### Reading.

Reading presents itself first, although it is open to discussion whether the child should acquire the art unconsciously, from his infancy upwards, or whether the effort should be deferred until he is, say, seven, and then made with vigour. In a valuable letter, addressed to her son John, we have the way of teaching to read adopted by that pattern mother, the mother of the Wesleys:—

"None of them was taught to read till five years old, except Kezzy, in whose case I was overruled; and she was more years in learning than any of the rest had been months. The way of teaching was this: the day before a child began to learn, the house was set in order, every one's work appointed them, and a charge given that no one should come into the room from nine to twelve, or from two to five, which were our school hours. One day was allowed the child wherein to learn its letters, and each of them did in that time know all its letters, great and small, except Molly and Nancy, who were a day and a half before they knew them perfectly, for which I then thought them very dull; but the reason why I thought them so was because the rest learned them so readily; and your brother Samuel, who was the first child I ever taught, learned the alphabet in a few hours. He was five years old the 10th of February; the next day he began to learn, and, as soon as he knew the letters, began at the first chapter of Genesis. He was taught to spell the first verse, then to read it over and over until he could read it off-hand without hesitation; so on, to the second verse, etc., till he took ten verses for a lesson, which he quickly did. Easter fell low that year, and by Whitsuntide he could read a chapter very well; for he read continually, and had such a prodigious memory that I cannot remember to have told him the same word twice. What was yet stranger, any word he had learnt in his lesson he knew wherever he saw it, either in his Bible or any other book, by which means he learned very soon to read an English author well." \*

\* Southey's "Life of Wesley."

It is much to be wished that thoughtful mothers would more often keep account of the methods they employ with their children, with some definite note of the success of this or that plan.

Many thoughtful persons consider that to learn to read a language so full of anomalies and difficulties as our own, is a task which should not be imposed too soon on the childish mind. But, as a matter of fact, few of us can recollect how or when we learned to read: for all we know, it came by nature, like the art of running; and not only so, but often mothers of the educated classes do not know how their children learned to read. "Oh, he taught himself," is all the account his mother can give of little Dick's proficiency. Whereby, it is plain, that this notion of the extreme difficulty of learning to read is begotten by the elders rather than by the children. There would be no little books entitled "Reading without Tears," if tears were not sometimes shed over the reading lesson; but, really, when that is case, the fault rests with the teacher. As for his letters, the child usually teaches himself. He has his box of wooden letters,

and picks out *p* for pudding, *b* for blackbird, *h* for horse, big and little, and knows them both. But the learning of the alphabet should be made a means of cultivating the child's observation: he should be made to see what he looks at. Make big *B* in the air, and let him name it; then let him make round *O*, and crooked *S*, and *T* for Tommy, and you name the letters as the little finger forms them with unsteady strokes in the air. To make the small letters thus from memory is a work of more art, and requires more careful observation on the child's part. A tray of sand is useful at this stage. The child draws his finger boldly through the sand, and then puts a back to his *D*; and, behold, his first essay in making a straight line and a curve. But the devices for making "A B C" are endless. There is no occasion to hurry the child: let him learn one form at a time, and know it so well that he can pick out the *d*'s, say, big and little, in a page of large print. Let him say *d* for duck, dog, doll, thus: *d*-uck, *d*-og, prolonging the sound of the initial consonant, and at last sounding *d* alone, not *dee*, but *d'*, the mere sound of the consonant separated as far as possible from the following vowel. Let the child alone, and he will learn the alphabet for himself: but few mothers can resist the pleasure of teaching it; and there is no reason why they should, for this kind of learning is no more than play to the child, and if the alphabet be taught to the little student, his appreciation of both form and sound will be cultivated. When should he begin? Whenever his box of wooden letters begins to interest him. The baby of two will often be able to name half a dozen letters; and there is no reason why he should not, so long as the finding and naming of letters is a game to him. But he must not be urged, required to show off, teased to find letters when his heart is set on other play.

The first exercises in the making of words will be just as pleasant to the child. Exercises treated as a game, which yet teach the powers of the letters, will be better to begin with than actual sentences. Take up two of his wooden letters and make the syllable "at;" tell him it is the word we use when we say "at home," "at school." Then, put *b* to "at"—*bat*; *c* to "at"—*cat*; *f* to "at"—*fat*, *hat*, *mat*, *sat*, *rat*, and so on. First, let the child say what the word becomes with each initial consonant; then let him add the right consonant to "at," in order to make *hat*, *pat*, *cat*. Let the syllables all be actual words which he knows. Set the words in a row, and let him read them off. Do this with the short-vowel sounds in combination with each of the consonants, and the child will learn to read off dozens of words of three letters, and will master the short-vowel sounds with initial and final consonants without effort. Before long, he will do the lesson for himself. "How many words can you make with 'en' and another letter, with 'od' and another letter, etc. Do not hurry him.

When this sort of exercise becomes so easy that it is no longer interesting, let the long sounds of the vowels be learnt in the same way: use the same syllables as before with a final *e*; thus, "at" becomes "ate," and we get *late*, *pate*, *rate*, etc. The child may be told that a in "ate" is long *a*; *a* in "rat," is short *a*. He will make the new sets of words with much facility, helped by the experience he gained in the former lessons.

Then the same sort of thing with final "ng"—"ing," "ang," "ong," "ung;" as *ring*, *fang*, *long*, *sung*: initial "th," as *then*, *that*: final "th," as *with*, *path*, *hath*, *lath*, and so on, through endless combinations, which will suggest themselves. This is not reading, but it is preparing the ground for reading; words will be no longer unfamiliar perplexing objects, when the child meets with them in a line of print. Require him to pronounce the words he makes with such finish and distinctness, that he can himself hear and count the sounds in a given word. Accustom him from the first to shut his eyes and spell the word he has made. This is important; reading is not spelling, nor is it necessary to spell in order to read well: but the good speller is the child whose eye is quick enough to take in the letters which compose it, in the act of reading off a word: And this is a habit to be acquired from the first: accustom him to see the letters in the word, and he will do so without effort.

If words were always made on a given pattern in English, if the same letters always represented the same sounds, learning to read would be an easy matter; for the child would soon acquire the few elements of which all words would, in that case, be composed. But, alas! many of our English words is, each, a law unto itself: there is nothing for it, but the child must learn to know them at sight; he must recognize "which," precisely as he recognizes "B," because he has seen it before, been made to look at it with interest, so that the pattern of the word is stamped on his retentive brain. This process should go on side by side with the other—the learning of the powers of the letters; for the more variety you can throw into his reading lessons, the more will the child enjoy them. Lessons in word-making help the child to take intelligent interest in words; and his progress in the art of reading depends chiefly on the "reading at sight" lessons. The teacher must be content to proceed very slowly, securing the ground under her feet as she goes. Say—

"Twinkle, twinkle, little star,  
How I wonder what you are."

is the first lesson: just those two lines. Read the passage

pronunciation of words spelt in the same way. For instance *h* takes the first word that occurs to me 'plea' the plural of 'plea' a fold is spelt pronounced with the *s* mute: carries the learner made from curranth in spelt with the final *s* sounded see also for every.

for the child, very slowly, sweetly, with just expression, so that it is pleasant to him to listen to. Point to each word as you read. Then, point to "twinkle," "wonder," "star," "what,"—and expect the child to pronounce each word in the verse taken promiscuously; then, when he shows that he knows each word by itself, and not before, let him read from the first on clear enunciation and expression: insist that the two lines with clear enunciation and expression: insist that the child fall into a dreary monotone, no more pleasant to himself than to his listener. Of course, by this time, he is able to say the two lines; and let him say them clearly and beautifully. In his after lessons he will learn the rest advance so slowly that he may just as well learn his reading exercises, both prose and poetry, as recitation lessons. Little poems suitable to be learned in this way will suggest themselves at once; but perhaps prose is better, on the whole, as offering more of the words in every day use, of Saxon origin, and of anomalous spelling. Short fables, and such graceful simple prose as we have in Mrs. Gatty's "Parables from Nature," are very suitable. Even for their very earliest reading lessons it is unnecessary to put twaddle into the hands of the children.

But we have not yet finished the reading lesson on "Twinkle, twinkle, little star." The child should hunt through two or three pages of good clear type, for "little," "star," "you," "are," each of the words he has learned, until the word he knows looks out upon him like the face of a friend in a crowd of strangers, and he is able to pounce upon it anywhere. Already the child has accumulated a little capital; he knows eight or ten words so well that he will recognize them anywhere, and the lesson has occupied probably, ten minutes. The next "reading at sight" lesson will begin with a hunt for the familiar words, and then—

"Up above the world so high,  
Like a diamond in the sky,"

should be gone through in the same way. As spelling is simply the art of seeing, seeing the letters in a word as one sees the features of a face—say to the child, "Can you spell sky?"—or any of the shorter words. He is put on his mettle, and if he fails this time, be sure he will be able to spell the word when you ask him next: but don't let him learn to spell or even say the letters aloud with the word before him.

As for understanding what they read, the children will be full of bright intelligent remarks and questions, and will take this part of the lesson into their own hands; indeed, the teacher will have to be on her guard not to let them carry her away from the subject.

The little people will probably have to be pulled up on the score of pronunciation. They must render "high," "sky," "like," "world," with delicate precision; "diamond," they will no doubt wish to hurry over, and say as "diamond," just as they will reduce "history" to "histury." But here is another advantage of slow and steady progress—the saying of each word receives due attention, and the child is trained in the habit of careful enunciation. Every day increases the number of words he is able to read at sight, and the more words he knows already, the longer his reading lesson becomes in order to afford the ten or a dozen new words which he should master every day. "But what a snail's progress!" you are inclined to say. Not so slow, after all: the child will thus learn, without appreciable labour, from two to three thousand words in the course of a year: in other words, he will learn to read, for the mastery of this number of words will carry him with comfort through most of the books that fall in his way.

Now compare the steady progress and constant interest and liveliness of such lessons with the deadly weariness of the ordinary reading lesson. The child blunders through a page or two in a dreary monotone, without expression, with imperfect enunciation. He comes to a word he does not know, and he spells it; that throws no light on the subject, and he is told the word: he repeats it, but as he has made no mental effort to secure the word, the next time he meets with it the same process is gone through. The reading lesson for that day comes to an end. The child has been miserably bored, and has not acquired one new word. Eventually, he learns to read, somehow, by mere dint of repetition; but consider, what an abuse of the child's intelligence is a system of teaching which makes him undergo daily labour with little or no result, and gives him a distaste for books before he has learned to use them.

#### Writing.

The teaching of writing, though much might be said, I have only time to offer a few hints. First, as was said before, let the child accomplish something perfectly in every lesson—a stroke, a pothook, a letter. Let the writing lesson be short, not to last more than five or ten minutes. Ease in writing comes by practice; but that must be secured later. In the mean time, the thing to be avoided is the habit of careless work—humpy *m*'s, angular *s*'s. Let the stroke be learned first; then, the pothook; then, the letters of which the pothook is an element—*m*, *n*, *o*, *u*, *r*, *h*, *p*, *g*; then *o*, and letters of which the curve is an element—*a*, *e*, *g*, *e*, *x*, *s*, *q*; then looped and irregular letters—*b*, *l*, *f*, *t*, etc. One letter to be perfectly formed in a day, and, the next day, the same elemental forms repeated in another letter, until it

No use  
'alal' if it  
were not so the ? on  
whole history  
of English  
would be lost  
and it is  
never known  
and ignorance  
to visit as  
the so-called  
shelling reformer do that other languages are uniform in their

All this on  
reading is  
excellent

No, in a book  
you have time  
for every thing



but you must imagine the rafts, and the island with the Mouse Tower, and the Nuns' Island, and the rest. Here are the hills, with the castles on the top—now on this side, now on that. This dot is Cologne," etc. Especially, let these talks cover all the home scenery and interests you are acquainted with, so that, by-and-by, when he looks at the map of England, he finds a score of familiar names which suggest landscapes to him—places where "mother has been,"—the woody flowery islets of the Thames; the smooth Sussex downs, delightful to run and roll upon, with soft carpet of turf and nodding harebells; the wild Yorkshire moors, with bilberries and heather; and always give him a rough sketch-map of the route you took in a given journey.

What next? Intimate knowledge, with the fullest details, of any country or region of the world, any county or district of his own country. It is not necessary that he should learn at this stage what is called the "geography" of the countries of Europe, the continents of the world—mere strings of names for the most part: he may learn these, but it is tolerably certain that he will not remember them. But let him be at home in any single region; let him see, with the mind's eye, the people at their work and at their play, the flowers and fruits in their seasons, the beasts, each in its habitat; and let him see all this sympathetically, that is, let him follow the adventures of a traveller;—and he knows more, is better furnished with ideas, than if he had learnt all the names on all the maps. The "way" of this kind of teaching is very simple and obvious: read to him, or read for him, that is, read bit by bit, and tell as you read, Hartwig's "Tropical World," the same author's "Polar World," and Livingstone's "Missionary Travels," Miss Bird amongst the Rocky Mountains, or in Japan—in fact, any interesting, well-written book of travel. It may be necessary to leave out a good deal, but every illustrated anecdote, every bit of description, is so much towards the child's education. Here, as elsewhere, the question is not how many things does he know, but how much does he know about each thing. Maps must be carefully used in this kind of work; a sketch map following the traveller's progress, to be compared finally with a more complete map of the region; and the teacher will exact a description of such and such a town, and such and such a district, marked on the map, by way of testing and confirming the child's exact knowledge. In this way, too, he gets intelligent notions of physical geography; in the course of his reading, he falls in with a description of a volcano, a glacier, a cañon, a hurricane; he hears all about, and asks and learns the how and the why of such phenomena at the moment when his interest is excited. In other words, he learns as his elders elect to learn for themselves, though they rarely allow the children to tread in paths so pleasant.

Supposing that between the child's fifth and his ninth year, a dozen well-chosen standard books of travel have been read with him in this way, he has gained distinct ideas of the landscape and productions and the manners of the people of every great region of the world; has laid up a store of reliable, valuable knowledge, that will last his lifetime; and, besides, has done something to acquire a taste for books and the habit of reading. Such books as *Mac Brassy's "Voyage in the Sunbeam,"* however interesting they be, should be avoided, as covering too much ground, and likely to breed some confusion of ideas.

#### History.

Much that has been said about the teaching of geography applies equally to that of history. Here, too, is a subject which should be to the child an inexhaustible store-house of ideas, should enrich the chambers of his House Beautiful with a thousand tableaux, pathetic and heroic, and should form in him, insensibly, principles whereby he will hereafter judge of the behaviour of nations, and will rule his own conduct as one of a nation. This is what the study of history should do for the child; but what is he to get out of the miserable little chronicle of feuds, battles, and death, which is presented to him by way of "a reign"—all the more repellent because it bristles with dates? As for the dates, they never come right; the tens and units he can get, but the centuries will go astray; and how is he to put the right events in the right reign, when, to him, one king differs from another only in name or number, one period from another only in date? But he blunders through with it; reads, in his pleasant, chatty little history book, all the reigns of all the kings, from William the Conqueror to William IV., and back to the dim days of British rule, and with what result? This: that, possibly, no way of warping the judgment of the child, of filling him with crude notions, narrow prejudices, is more successful than that of carrying him through some such course of English history; and all the more so, if his little text book be moral or religious in tone, and undertakes to point the moral as well as to record the fact. Moral teaching falls, no doubt, within the province of history; but the one small volume which the child uses, affords no scope for the fair and reasonable discussion upon which moral decision should be based, nor is the child old enough to be put into the judicial attitude which such a decision supposes.

The fatal mistake is in the notion that he must learn "outlines," or, a baby edition of the whole history of England, or of Rome, just as he must cover the geography of all the

world. Let him, on the contrary, linger pleasantly over the history of a single man, a short period, until he thinks the thoughts of that man, is at home in the ways of that period. Though he is reading and thinking of the life-time of a single man, he is really getting intimately acquainted with the history of a whole nation for a whole age. Let him spend a year of happy intimacy with Alfred, "the truth-teller," with the Conqueror, with Richard and Saladin, or, with Henry V., Shakespeare's Henry V., and his victorious army. Let him know the great people and the common people, the ways of the court and of the crowd. Let him know what other nations were doing while we at home were doing thus and thus. If he come to think that the people of another age were truer, larger-hearted, simpler-minded than ourselves, that the people of some other land were, at one time, at any rate, better than we, why, so much the better for him. For the matter for this intelligent teaching of history, eschew, in the first place, nearly all history books written expressly for children; and, in the next place, all compendiums, outlines, abstracts, whatsoever. For the abstracts, considering what part the study of history is fitted to play in the education of the child, there is not a word to be said in their favour: while the children of educated parents are able to understand history written with literary power, and are not attracted by the twaddle of reading-made-easy little history books. Given, judicious skipping, and a good deal of the free paraphrasing mothers are so ready at, and the children may be taken through the first few volumes of a well-written, illustrated, popular history of England, say as far as the Tudors. In the course of such reading, a good deal of questioning into them and questioning out of them, will be necessary, both to secure their attention, and to fix the facts. This is the least that should be done; but, better than this, would be fuller information, more graphic details about two or three early epochs. The early history of a nation is far better fitted than its later records for the study of the children: the story moves in a few broad, simple lines; while statesmanship, so far as it exists, is no more than the efforts of a resourceful mind to cope with circumstances. Mr. Freeman has provided delightful early English history for the children, but may I suggest the desirableness of taking them straight to the fountain-head, where possible? In these early years, while there are no examinations ahead, and the children may yet go leisurely, let them get the *spirit* of history into them by reading, at least, one old "Chronicle," written by a man who saw and knew something of what he wrote about, and did not get it at second-hand. These old books are easier and pleasanter reading than any modern works on history, because the writers do not philosophize; they know nothing of the "dignity of history;" they purl along pleasantly as a forest brook, tell you "all about it," stir your heart with the story of a great event, amuse you with pageants and shows, make you intimate with the great people, and friendly with the lowly. They are just the right thing for the children whose eager little souls want to get at the living people behind the words of the history book, and care nothing at all about progress, or statutes, or about anything but the persons, for whose actions history is to the child's mind no more than a convenient stage. A child who has been carried through a single old chronicle in this way, has a better foundation for an historical training than if he knew all the dates and names and facts that ever were crammed for an examination. First in order of time, and full of the most captivating reading, is the "Ecclesiastical History of England," of the Venerable Bede, who, writing of himself, so early as the seventh century, says, "It was always sweet to me to learn, to teach, and to write." "He has left us," says Professor Morley, "a history of the early years of England, succinct, yet often warm with life; business-like, and yet child-like in its tone; at once practical and spiritual, simply just, and the work of a true scholar, breathing love to God and man. We owe to Bede alone the knowledge of much that is most interesting in our early history." William of Malmesbury (twelfth century) says of Bede, "that almost all knowledge of past events was buried in the same grave with him;" and he is no bad judge, for, in his "Chronicles of the Kings of England," he himself is considered to have carried to perfection the art of chronicle-making. He is especially vivid and graphic about contemporary events—the story of the dreary civil war of Stephen and Matilda. Meantime, there is Asser, who writes the life of Alfred, whose friend and fellow-worker he is. "It seems to me right," he says, "to explain a little more fully what I have heard from my lord Alfred." He tells us how, "When I had come into his presence at the royal vill, called Leonaford, I was honourably received by him, and remained that time with him at his court about eight months, during which I read to him whatever books he liked, and such as he had at hand; for this is his most usual custom, both night and day, amid his many other occupations of mind and body, either himself to read books, or to listen whilst others read them." When he was not present to see for himself, as at the battle of Ashdown, Asser takes pains to get the testimony of eye-witnesses. "But Alfred, as we have been told by those who were present and would not tell an untruth, marched up promptly with his men to give them battle; for King Ethelred remained a long time in his tent in prayer." Then there are "Chronicles of the Crusades," contemporary narratives of the crusades of

Richard Cour de Lion, by Richard of Devizes, and Geoffrey de Vinsany, and of the crusade of Saint Louis, by Lord John de Joinville—delightful reading.

It is needless to extend the list; one such old chronicle in a year, or the suitable bits of one such chronicle, and the child's imagination is aglow, his mind is teeming with ideas; he has had speech of those who have themselves seen and heard, and the matter-of-fact way in which the old monks tell their tales is exactly what the child prefers. Afterwards, you may put any dull outlines into his hands, and he will make history out of them for himself.

But every nation has its heroic age before authentic history begins: there were giants in the land in those days, and the child wants to know about them. He has every right to revel in such classic myths as we possess as a nation, and to land him in a company of painted savages by way of giving him his first introduction to the past, is a little hard; it is to make his vision of the past harsh and bald as a Chinese painting. But what is to be done? If we ever had a Homeric age, have we not, being a practical people, lost all record thereof? Here is another debt that we owe to those old monkish chroniclers: the echoes of some dim, rich past had come down to, at any rate, the twelfth century: they fell upon the ear of a Welsh priest, one Geoffrey of Monmouth; and, while William of Malmesbury was writing his admirable "History of the Kings of England," what does Geoffrey do but weave the traditions of the people into an orderly "History of the British Kings," reaching back all the way to King Brut, the grandson of Æneas. How he came to know about kings that no other historian had heard of, is a matter he is a little reticent about; he got it all, he says, out of "that book in the British language, which Walter, Archdeacon of Oxford, brought out of Brittany." Be that as it may, here we read of Gorboduc, King Lear, Merlin, the Holy Grail, and, best of all, of King Arthur, the writer making "the little finger of his Arthur stouter than the back of Alexander the Great." Here is, indeed, a treasure-trove which the children should be made free of ten years before they come to read the "Idylls of the King." These various "chronicles," written in Latin by the monks, are to be had in very readable English; the only caution to be observed is, that the mother should run her eye over the pages before she reads them aloud.\*

\* Bohn's Antiquarian Library (5s. a volume) includes Bede, William of Malmesbury, Dr. Gilla's "Six Old English Chronicles,"—Asser and Geoffrey of Monmouth being two of them,—Chronicles of the Crusaders," etc.

Froissart, again, most delightful of chroniclers, himself then, about the court of Queen Philippe, when he chose to be in England—from whom else should the child get the story of the French wars? So of Holinshed, the "Paston Letters," Clarendon, and much else; the principle being, that, wherever practicable, the child should get his first notions of a given period, not from the modern historian, the commentator, and reviewer, but from the original source of history, the writings of contemporaries.

In the same way, readings from Plutarch's "Lives" will afford the best preparation for the study of Grecian or Roman history. "Alexander the Great" is something more than a name to the child who reads this sort of thing:—

"When the horse Bucephalus was offered in sale to Philip, at the price of thirteen talents (= £2518 15s.), the king, with the prince and many others, went into the field to see some trial made of him. The horse appeared very vicious and unmanageable, and was so far from suffering himself to be mounted, that he would not bear to be spoken to, but turned fiercely upon all the grooms. Philip was displeased at their bringing him so wild and ungovernable a horse, and bade them take him away. But Alexander, who had observed him well, said, 'What a horse are they losing for want of skill and spirit to manage him!'

"Philip at first took no notice of this: but, upon the prince's often repeating the same expression, and showing great uneasiness, he said, 'Young man, you find fault with your elders as if you knew more than they, or could manage the horse better.'

"And I certainly could," answered the prince.

"If you should not be able to ride him, what forfeiture will you submit to for your rashness?"

"I will pay the price of the horse."

"Upon this all the company laughed; but the king and prince agreeing as to the forfeiture, Alexander ran to the horse, and laying hold on the bridle, turned him to the sun, for he had observed, it seems, that the shadow which fell before the horse, and continually moved as he moved, greatly disturbed him. While his fierceness and fury lasted, he kept speaking to him softly and stroking him; after which he gently let fall his mantle, leaped lightly upon his back, and got his seat very safe. Then, without pulling the reins too hard, or using either whip or spur, he set him agoing. As soon as he perceived his uneasiness abated, and that he wanted only to run, he put him in a full gallop, and pushed him on both with the voice and spur.

"Philip and all his court were in great distress for him at first, and a profound silence took place; but when the prince had turned him and brought him safe back, they all received him with loud exclamations, except his father, who wept for joy, and, kissing him, said, 'Seek another kingdom, my son, that may be worthy of thy abilities, for Macedonia is too small for thee.'

Here, again, even in a translation, we get the sort of vivid, graphic presentation which makes "history" as real to the child as are the adventures of Robinson Crusoe.

By way of illustration, "Ivanhoe," "Harold," "The Last of the Barons," Kingsley's "Hereward," Shakespeare's historical plays, may, subject to treatment, be pressed into service with great advantage. To sum up, to know what there is to be known, about even one short period, is far better for the children than to know the "outlines" of all history. And, in the second place, children are quite able to take in intelligent ideas in intelligent language, and should by no means be excluded from the best that is written on the period they are about.

#### Grammar.

Of Grammar, Latin and English, I have left myself time to say very little. In the first place, grammar, being a study of words, and not of things, is by no means attractive to the child, nor should he be hurried into it. English grammar, again, depending as it does on the position and logical connection of words, is peculiarly hard for him to grasp. In this respect, the Latin grammar is easier; a change in the form, the shape of the word to denote case, is what the child can see with his bodily eye, and, therefore, is plainer to him than the abstract ideas of nominative and objective case as we have them in English. Therefore, if he learns no more than two declensions and a verb or two, it is well he should learn thus much, if only to help him to see what English grammar would be at when it speaks of a change in case or mood, yet shows no change in the form of the word. Again, because English grammar is a logical study, and deals with sentences and the positions that words occupy in them, rather than with words, and what they are in their own right, it is better that the child should begin with the sentence, and not with the parts of speech; should learn a little of what is called analysis of sentences, before he learns to parse: should learn to divide simple sentences into the thing we speak of, and what we say about it—"The cat—sits on the hearth"—before he is lost in the fog of person, mood, and part of speech.

French stands on another footing altogether, and should be acquired as English is, not as a grammar, but as a living speech. To train the ear to distinguish and the lips to produce the French vowels is a valuable part of the education of the senses, and one which can hardly be undertaken too soon. Again, all educated persons should be able to speak French. Sir Lyon Playfair, speaking recently at a conference of French masters, lamented feelingly our degeneracy in this respect, and instanced the grammar school of Perth, to show that in a Scotch school, in the sixteenth century, the boys were required to speak Latin during school hours, and French at all other times. There is hardly another civilized nation so dull in acquiring foreign tongues as we, English, of the present time; but, probably, the fault lies rather in the way we set about, than in any natural incapacity for languages. As regards French, for instance, our difficulties are twofold—the want of a vocabulary, and a certain *gaucherie* in producing unfamiliar sounds. It is evident that both these hindrances should be removed in early childhood. The child should never see French words in print until he has learned to say them with as much ease and readiness as if they were English. The desire to give printed combinations of letters the sounds they would bear in English words is the real cause of our national difficulty in pronouncing French. Again, the child's vocabulary should increase steadily at the rate of half a dozen words, say, a day. Think of fifteen hundred words in a year! The child who has that many words, and knows how to apply them, can speak French. Of course, his teacher will take care, that, in giving words, she gives idioms also, and that, as he learns new words, they are put into sentences and kept in use from day to day. A note-book in which she enters the child's new words and sentences will easily enable the teacher to do this. The young child has no *mauvaise honte* about saying French words, he pronounces them as simply as if they were English; but it is very important that he should acquire a pure accent from the first. It is not often advisable that young English children should be put into the hands of a French governess or nurse, but would it not be possible for half a dozen families, say, to engage a French lady, who would give half an hour daily to each family? But this long lecture must be brought to a close, and with the disappointing sense that subjects of importance in the child's education have been left out of count, and that no one subject has been adequately treated. It is impossible, in a single lecture, even to touch upon all the subjects the children should learn, or to indicate, however roughly, the best ways of treating these.

Certain subjects of peculiar educational value, music and drawing, for instance, I have said nothing about, partly for want of space, and, partly, because if the mother have not Sir Joshua Reynolds's "that" in her, hints from an outsider will not produce the art-feeling which is the condition of success in this sort of teaching. Let the children learn from the first under artists, lovers of their work: it is a serious mistake to let the child lay the foundation of whatever he may do in the future under ill-qualified mechanical teachers, who kindle in him none of the enthusiasm which is the life of art. I have dwelt at length upon the teaching of geography and history, because it seems to me that the child loses greatly by the ordinary ways of teaching these.

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who took no pains to deliver their children from sloth, from sensual appetites, from wilfulness, no pains to fortify them with the *habits* of a good life. We live in a redeemed world, and infinite grace and help from above attend every rightly directed effort in the training of the children; but I do not see much ground for hoping that divine grace will stop in as a substitute for any and every faculty we choose to leave undeveloped or misdirected. In the physical world, we do not expect miracles to make up for our neglect of the use of means; the rickety body, the misshapen limb, which the child has to thank his parents for, remain with him through life, however much else he may have to thank God for; and a feeble will, bad habits, an uninstructed conscience, stick by many a Christian man through his life, because his parents failed in their duty to him, and he has not had force enough in himself to supply their omission. In this matter of conscience for instance, the *laissez-faire* habit of his parents is the cause of real wrong and injury to many a child. The parents are thankful to believe that their child is born with a conscience; they hope his conduct may be ruled thereby; and the rest they leave—the child and his conscience may settle it between them. Now this is to suppose either that a full-grown conscience is born into an infant body, or that it grows, like the hair and the limbs, with the growth of the body, and is not subject to conditions of spiritual development proper to itself. In other words, it is to suppose that conscience is an *infallible* guide—a delusion people cling to, in spite of common sense and of every-day experience of the wrong-headed things men do from conscientious motives.

Mrs. Oliphant has, in one of her story-books, a capital study of the action of an instructed conscience. A French woman, of the bourgeois class, comes over to England, and forces herself into the house of an English family of position on false pretences, claiming to be the mother of a child that is not hers, in order to share his advantages as heir to an English estate. For months, for years, she lives a daily lie; but that she does not mind. The lady of the house finds her presence intolerable, but that she does not mind; the ease and comfort of her present position are enough to satisfy her, and she is troubled with no spiritual qualms. But, in a moment of real sympathy and affection, she forgets herself, and addresses this same lady as "Miss." Here, at last, is an offence that her conscience takes cognizance of. She has been brought up to know very well that it is presumption to address one's betters thus. She is filled with shame and contrition, weeps, implores forgiveness, and shows the signs of genuine repentance, that all attempts to convince her of her really criminal offences had failed to call forth. Here is an illustration, if an exaggerated one, of a sort of thing so common that it has passed into popular proverbs: "Honour among thieves," "To strain out a gnat and swallow a camel," point to cases of *uninstructed* conscience; while "The wish is father to the thought," "None is so blind as he who won't see," point to the still more common cases, in which a man knowingly tricks his conscience into acquiescence. Then, if conscience be not an infallible guide,—if it pass blindfold by heinous offences, and come down heavily upon some mere quibble, tithing mint, anise, and cummin, and neglecting the weightier matters of the law,—if conscience be liable to be bamboozled, persuaded into calling evil good, and good evil, when *Desire* is the special pleader before the bar, where is its use—this broken reed? Is this stern, lawgiver of the breast no more, after all, than a fiction of the brain? Is your conscience no more than what you happen to think about, your own actions and those of other people? On the contrary, these aberrations of conscience are perhaps the strongest proof that it exists as a real power. As Adam Smith has well said, "the supreme authority of conscience is felt and tacitly acknowledged by the worst, no less than by the best of men; for even they who have thrown off all hypocrisy with the world, are at pains to conceal their real character from their own eyes."

What conscience is, how far it lies in the feelings, how far in the reason, how far it is independent of both, are questions which it is not necessary for practical purposes to settle; but this much is evident—that conscience is as essential a part of human nature as are the affections and the reason, and that conscience is that spiritual sense whereby we have knowledge of good and evil. The six months old child who cannot yet speak exhibits the workings of conscience; "Naughty baby!" will make him drop his eyes and hide his face. But, observe, the mother may say, "Naughty baby!" by way of an experiment when baby is all sweetness, and the poor little untutored conscience rises all the same, and condemns the child on the word of another. Facts like this give one a glimpse of the appalling responsibility that lies upon parents. The child comes into the world with a moral faculty, a delicate organ whereby he discerns the flavour of good and evil, and, at the same time, has a perception of delight in the good—in himself or others,—of loathing and abhorrence of the evil. But, poor little child, he is like a navigator who does not know how to "box his compass." He is born to love the good, and to hate the evil, but he has no real knowledge of what is good and what is evil; what instructions he has, he puts no faith in, but yields himself in simplicity to the steering of others. The wonder that Almighty God can endure so far to leave the very making of an immortal being in the hands of human parents, is only matched by the wonder that human parents can

accept this divine trust with hardly a thought of its significance. Looking, then, upon conscience in the child rather as an undeveloped capability than as a supreme authority, the question is, how is this nascent lord of the life to be educated up to its high functions of informing the will, and decreeing the conduct; for, though the ill-taught conscience may make fatal blunders, and a man may carry slaughter amongst the faithful because his conscience bids; yet, on the other hand, no man ever attained a godly, righteous, and sober life except as he was ruled by a good conscience—a conscience with not only the *capacity* to discern good and evil, but *trained* to perceive the qualities of the two. Many a man may have the great delicacy of taste which should qualify him for a tea-taster, but it is only as he has trained experience in the qualities of teas that his nice taste is valuable to his employers and a source of income to himself.

As with that of the will, so with the education of the conscience, it depends upon much that has gone before. Refinement of conscience cannot co-exist with ignorance. The untutored savage has his scruples that we cannot enter into; we cannot understand to this day how it was that the horrors of the Indian Mutiny arose from the mere suspicion that a mixture of hogs' lard and beef fat had been dealt out to the Sepoys to grease the locks of their muskets with. These scruples of conscience which are beyond the range of our ideas we call superstitions or prejudices, and are unwilling to look upon conduct as conscientious—even when prompted by the uninstructed conscience—unless in so far as it is reasonable and right in itself. Therefore, it is plain that, before conscience is in a position to pronounce its verdict on the facts of a given case, the cultivated reason must review the pros and cons, the practised judgment must balance these, deciding which have the greater weight. Attention must bring all the powers of the mind to bear on the question; habits of right action must carry the feelings, must make right-doing seem the easier and the pleasanter. In the mean time, desire is clamorous: but conscience, the unbiased judge, duly informed in full court of the merits of the case, decides for the right. The will carries out the verdict of conscience, and the man whose conduct is uniformly moulded upon the verdicts of conscience, is the conscientious man, of whose actions and opinions you may always be sure beforehand. But life is not long enough for such lengthy process; a thousand things have to be decided offhand, in the twinkling of an eye, and then what becomes of these elaborate proceedings? That is just the advantage of an instructed conscience backed by a trained intelligence: the judge is always sitting; the counsel, for defence and prosecution, are always on the spot. "What do you think of the outcome of 'The Mill on the Floss'?" or, "of the political career of General Grant?" you are asked: in an instant, the court is in session, the case has a hearing, and judgment is pronounced before your friend perceives that he is waiting for an answer. "Don't you think Mrs. Jones dresses absurdly for her station?" Candour has a word in the ear of conscience; there is a momentary putting of one's self in Mrs. Jones's place, and the answer is, at any rate, less severe than it might have been. Here is, indeed, a high motive for the *all round* training of the child's intelligence—he wants the highest culture you can give him, backed by carefully formed habits, in order that he may have a conscience always "on the spot," supported by every power of the mind; and such a conscience is, in truth, the very flower of a noble life. The instructed conscience may claim to be, if not infallible, at any rate nearly always right. It is not generally mature until the man is mature; young people, however right-minded and earnest, are apt to err, chiefly because they fix their attention too much upon some one duty, some one theory of life, at the expense of the "other sides" of the question. But even the child, with the growing conscience and the growing powers, is able to say, "No, I can't; it would not be right;" "Yes, I will; for it is right." And, once able to give either of these answers to the solicitations that assail him, the child is able to live; for the rest, the development, and what may be called the *adjustment* of conscience will keep pace with his intellectual growth. But, allowing that a great deal of various discipline must go to secure that final efflorescence of a good conscience, what is to be done by way of training the conscience itself, quickening the spiritual taste so that the least *suspicion* of evil is detected and rejected?

There is no part of education more nice and delicate than this, nor any in which grown-up people are more apt to blunder. Every one knows how tiresome it is to discuss any nice moral question with children; how the little *monkeys* quibble, suggest a hundred ingenious explanations or evasions, fail to be shocked or to admire in the right places, in fact, play with the whole question; or, what is more tiresome still, are severe and righteous overmuch, and "deal damnation round" with a great deal of heartiness and goodwill. Sensible parents are often distressed at this want of conscience in the children; but they are not in fault; the mature conscience demands to be backed up by the mature intellect, and the children have neither the one nor the other. Discussions of the kind should be put down; the children should not be encouraged to give their opinions on questions of right and wrong, and little books should not be put into their hands which pronounce

authoritatively upon our conduct. It would be well if the reticence of the Bible in this respect were observed by the writers of children's books, whether of story or history. The child hears the history of Joseph read from the Bible almost without comment or explanation. He does not need to be told what was "naughty" and what was "good;" there is no need to press home the teaching, or the Bible were written in vain, and good and bad actions carry no witness with them. Let all the circumstances of the daily Bible reading—the consecutive reading, from the first chapter of Genesis onwards with necessary omissions—be delightful to the child; let him be in his mother's room, in his mother's arms; let that quarter of an hour be one of sweet leisure and sober gladness, the child's whole interest being allowed to go to the story without distracting moral considerations, and then the less talk the better; the story will sink in, and bring its own teaching, a little now, and more every year as he is able to bear it. One such story will be in him a constantly growing, fruitifying moral idea.

The Bible first and supreme; but any true picture of life, whether a tale of golden deeds or of faulty and struggling life, bring alimony to the growing conscience. The child gets into the habit of fixing his attention on conduct; actions are weighed by him, at first, by their consequences, but, by degrees, his conscience acquires discriminating power, and such and such behaviour is bad or good to him whatever its consequences. And this silent growth of the moral faculty takes place all the more surely if the distraction of chatter on the subject is avoided, for a thousand small movements of vanity and curiosity and mere love of talk are called into play, which take off the attention from the moral idea which should be conveyed to the conscience. Of course this does not apply to approval or disapproval shown in the countenance and tone of the reader in cases of reading aloud. Still more important is it that the child should not be allowed to condemn the conduct of the people about him. Whether he is right or wrong in his verdict is not the question; the habit of bestowing blame will certainly blunt his conscience, deaden his sensibility to the injunction, "Judge not, that ye be not judged."

But the child's own conduct: surely he may be called upon to look into that? His conduct, including his words, yes; but his motives, no; nothing must be done to induce the evil habit of introspection. Also, in setting the child to consider his ways, regard must be had to the extreme ignorance of the childish conscience, a degree of ignorance puzzling to grown-up people when they chance to discover it, which is not often, for the children, notwithstanding their endless chatter and their friendly loving ways, live very much to themselves. They commit serious offences against truth, modesty, love, and do not know in the least that they have done wrong, while some absurd little feather-weight of transgression oppresses their little souls. A child broke, in passing, a green spray from a garden wall, her companion took her by the hand and said, "Come with me, I know the lady who lives in that house," and the poor little trembling thing—so she has told me since she became a woman—went through frightful terrors of the law in the few moments that passed before a gift of flowers assured her that "the lady of the house" had nothing against her. Again, I knew a lovely little boy, with the face—and the heart, too—of an angel, who deliberately poked a pet canary to death, running a stick through the bars of its cage. So, children will bite and hurt one another viciously, commit petty thefts, do such shocking things that their parents fear they must have very bad natures; it is not so; it is simply that the untutored conscience sees no clear boundary line between right and wrong, and is as apt to err on the one side as the other. I once saw a dying child of twelve who was wearing herself out with her great distress, because she feared she had committed "the unpardonable sin," so she said; and that was—that she had been saying her prayers without even kneeling up in bed! The ignorance of the children about the commonest matters of right and wrong is really pathetic; and all the time, they are too often treated as if they knew all about it, because "they have conscience," as if conscience were any more than a spiritual organ, waiting for development and direction! That the children do wrong *knowingly* is another matter, and goes, alas, without saying; all I am pressing for, is the real need there exists to *instruct* them in their duty—and this, not at haphazard, but regularly and progressively. Kindness, for instance, is, let us say, the subject of instruction this week. There is one of the sweet talks with "mother" that the children love—a short talk in act and word, look and manner. A well of love, shut up and hidden in a little boy's heart, does not do anybody much good; the love must bubble up as a spring, flow out in a stream, and then it is *kindness*. Then will follow little daily talks about kind ways, to brothers and sisters, to playmates, to parents, to grown-up friends, to servants, to people in pain and trouble, to dumb creatures, to people we don't see but yet can think about—all in distress, the heathen. Give the children one thought at a time, and every time, some lovely example of loving-kindness that will fire the little hearts with the desire to do likewise. Take our Lord's parable of the "Good Samaritan" for a model of instruction in morals. Let tale and talk make the children emulous of virtue, and then give them the "Go and do like-

wise," the law. Having presented to them the idea of kindness, in many aspects, and with the law: Be kind, or, "Be kindly affectioned one to another." Let them know that this is the law of God for little children and for grown-up people. Now, conscience is instructed, the feelings are enlisted on the side of duty, and if the child is brought up, it is for breaking the law of kindness, a law that he knows of, that his conscience convicts him in the breaking. Do not give the children deterrent examples of error, because of the sad proclivities of human nature, but always tell them of beautiful "Golden Deeds," small and great, that shall stir them as trumpet-calls to the battle of life. Be courteous, be candid, be grateful, be considerate, be true,—there are aspects of duty enough to occupy the attention of mother and child for every day of the child-life; and, all the time, the idea of duty is being formed and conscience is being educated and developed. At the same time, the mother exercises the friendly vigilance of a guardian angel, being watchful, not to catch the child tripping, but to guide him into the acting out of the duty she has already made lovely in his eyes; for it is only as we do, that we learn to do, and become strong in the doing. As she instructs her child in duty, she teaches him to listen to the voice of conscience as to the voice of God—"Do this," or "Do it not," within the breast—to be obeyed with full assurance. It is objected, that we are making infallible, not the divinely implanted conscience, but that conscience which is made effective by discipline. It is ever so; in every department of life, physical or spiritual, human effort appears to be the condition of the Divine energizing; there must be a stretching forth of the withered arm before it receives strength, and we have every reason to believe that the instructed conscience, being faithfully followed, is divinely illuminated.

#### The Divine Life in the Child.

It is evident we have not yet got touch of—  
"The very pulse of the machine."

Habits, feeling, reason, conscience—we have followed these into the inmost recesses of the child's life; each acts upon the other, but what acts upon the last: what acts upon them all? "It is," says a writer who has searched into the deep things of God—"it is a King that our spirits cry for, to guide them, discipline them, unite them to each other: to give them a victory over themselves, a victory over the world. It is a Priest that our spirits cry for, to lift them above themselves to their God and Father,—to make them partakers of His nature, fellow-workers in carrying out His purposes. Christ's Sacrifice is the one authentic testimony that He is both the Priest and King of men."

\* Maurice, "Sermons on Sacrifice."

Conscience, we have seen, is effective only as it is moved from within, from that innermost chamber of Mansoul, that Holy of Holies, the secrets of which are only known to the High-priest, who "needed not that any man should tell Him, for He knew what was in man." It is necessary, however, that we should gather up crumbs of fact and inference, and set in order such knowledge as we have; for the keys even of this innermost chamber are placed in the hands of parents, and it is a great deal in their power to en throne the King, to induct the Priest, that every human spirit cries for.

We take it for granted in common speech that every soul is a "living soul," a fully developed full-grown soul; but the language of the Bible and that of general experience seem to point to startling conclusions. It was said of Shelley, by an able critic, that if we could suppose that any human being was made without a soul, he was such an abortive attempt: he had reason, imagination, passions, all the appetites and desires of an intelligent being, while he exercised not one of the functions of the soul. Now, what are these functions, the suspension of which calls the very existence of a man's soul in question? We must go back to the axiom of Augustine—"the soul of man is for God, as God is for the soul." The soul has one appetite, for the things of God; breathes one air, the breath, the Spirit of God; has one desire, for the knowledge of God; one only joy, in the face of God. "I want to live in the Light of a Countenance which never ceases to smile upon me" \* is the language of the

\* "Christmas Day, and other Sermons."

soul. The direct action of the soul is all Godward, with a reflex action towards men. The speech of the soul is prayer and praise, the right hand of the soul is faith, the light of the soul is love, the love of God shed abroad upon it. Now, observe, these are the functions, this the life of the soul, the only functions, the only life it can have: if it have not these, it has no power to turn aside and find the life of its *land* elsewhere. As the conscience, the will, the reason, is a mere germ, utterly ineffective till it be nourished with its proper food, exercised in its proper functions; so of the soul, and its chamber is empty, with cobwebbed doors and clouded windows, until it awakes to its proper life: not quite empty, though, for there is the germ, the nascent soul; and the awaking into life takes place, sometimes with the sudden shock, the gracious miracle which we call conversion; sometimes, when the parents so will, the soul of the child expands times, when the gentle sweet growth and gradual unfolding as of a with a gentle sweet growth and gradual unfolding as of a flower. There are torpid souls, which are yet alive; there

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Part of it? I don't think you can call that a scripture? Conscience

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they

By

like Joseph, surely it was better a child should not read or hear it all. That system of turning children loose on the Bible is the great defect in Protestant education.

By

? a destroying angel.

Then why on earth did her parents ever let her hear of an unpardonable sin?

By See copy

"to get touch of" "to be in touch with" "are modern slang!" "think"

I should say the able critic knew little about souls and nothing about Shelley

By

are feeble, sickly souls, which are yet alive; and there are souls which no movement Godward ever quickens. This life of the soul, what is it? Communicated life, as when one lights a torch at the fire? Perhaps; but it is something more intimate, more unspeakable: "I am the Life;" "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men;" "Abide in Me and I in you." The truth is too ineffable to be uttered in any words but those given to us. But it means this at least, that the living soul does not abide alone in its place; that that place becomes the temple of the living God. "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. How dreadful is this place!"

But this holy mystery, this union and communion of God and the soul, how may human parents presume to meddle with it? What can they do? How can they promote it? and is there not every risk that they may lay rude hands upon the ark? In the first place, it does not rest with the parent to choose whether he will or will not attempt to quicken and nourish this Divine life in his child. To do so is his bounden duty and service. If he neglect or fail in this, I am not sure that it matters much that he has fulfilled his duties in the physical, moral, and mental culture of his child, except in so far as the child is the fitter for the Divine service when the Divine life is awakened in him. But what can the parent do? Just this, and no more: he can present the idea of God to the soul of the child. Here, as throughout His universe, Almighty God works by apparently inadequate means. Who would say that a bee can produce apple trees? Yet a bee flies away from an apple tree laden with the pollen of its flowers: this it unwittingly deposits on the stigmas of the flowers of the next tree it comes to. The bee goes, but the pollen remains, but with all the length of the style between it and the immature ovule below. That does not matter; the ovule has no power to reach the pollen grain, but the latter sends forth a slender tube, within the tube of the style; the ovule is reached; behold, the fruit, and its seed, and, if you like, future apple trees! Accept the parable: the parent is little better in this matter than the witless bee; it is his part to deposit, so to speak, within reach of the soul of the child, some fruitful idea of God; the immature soul makes no effort towards that idea, but the living Word reaches down, touches the soul, and—there is life, growth, and beauty, flower and fruit.

I venture to ask you to look, for once, at these Divine mysteries from the same philosophical standpoint we have taken up regarding all the faculties and functions of the child, partly because it is instructive to see how the mysteries of the religious life appear when it is looked at from without its own sphere, partly because I wished to rise by unbroken steps to the supreme function of the parent in the education of his child. For here the similitude of the bee and the apple tree fails. The parent must not make blundering, witless efforts: as this is the highest duty imposed upon him, it is also the most delicate; and he will have infinite need of faith and prayer, tact and discretion, humility, gentleness, love, and sound judgment, if he would present his child to God, and the thought of God to the soul of his child.

"If we think of God as an exactor and not a giver," it has been well said, "exactors and not givers shall we become." Yet is not this the light in which God is most commonly set before the children—a Pharaoh demanding his tale of bricks, bricks of good behaviour and right-doing. Do not parents deliberately present God as an exactor, to back up the feebleness of their own government; and do they not freely utter, on the part of God, threats they would be unwilling to utter on their own part. Again, what child has not heard from his nurse this, delivered with much energy, "God does not love you, you naughty boy! He will send you to the bad place!" And these two thoughts of God, as an exactor and a punisher, make up, often enough, all the idea the poor child gets of his Father in heaven. What fruit can come of this but aversion, the turning away of the child from the face of his Father? What if, instead, were given to him the thought well expressed in the words, "The all-forgiving gentleness of God."

These are but two of many deterrent thoughts of God commonly presented to the tender soul; and the mother who realizes that the heart of her child may be irrevocably turned against God by the ideas of Him imbibed in the nursery, will feel the necessity of grave and careful thought, and definite resolve, as to what teaching her child shall receive on this momentous subject. She will most likely forbid any mention of the Divine name to the children, except by their parents, explaining, at the same time, that she does so because she cares so much that her children should get none but right thoughts on this great matter. It is better that the children should receive a few vital essential ideas, that their souls may grow upon, than a great deal of vague indefinite teaching.

How to select these few quickening thoughts of the infinite God? The selection is not so difficult to make as would appear at first sight. In the first place, we must teach that which we know, know by the life of the soul, not with any mere knowledge of the mind. Now, of the vast mass of the doctrines and the precepts of religion, we shall find that there are only a few vital truths that we have so taken into our being that we live upon them—this person, these; that person, those; some of us, not more than a single one. One or more, these are the truths we must teach

the children, because these will come straight out of our hearts with the enthusiasm of conviction which rarely fails to carry its own idea into the spiritual life of another. There is no more fruitful source of what it is hardly too much to call infant infidelity than the unreal dead words which are poured upon the children about the best things, with an artificial solemnity of tone and manner intended to make up for the want of any real living meaning in the words. Let the parent who only knows one thing from above, teach his child that one; more will come to him by the time the child is ready for more.

Again, there are some ideas of the spiritual life more proper than others to the life and needs of the child. Thus, Christ the Joy-giver is more to him than the Consoler.

Again, there are some few ideas which are as the daily bread of the soul, without which life and growth are impossible. All other teaching may be deferred until the child's needs bring him to it; but whoever sends his child out into life without these vital ideas of the spiritual life, sends him forth with a dormant soul, however well-instructed he may be in theology.

Again, the knowledge of God is distinct from morality, or, what the children call "being good," though "being good" follows from that knowledge. But let these come in their right order. Do not bespeak the child to weariness about "being good" as what he owes to God, without letting in upon him first a little of that knowledge which shall make him good.

We are no longer suffering under an embarrassment of riches; these four limitations shut out so much of the ordinary teaching about Divine things that the question becomes rather, What shall we teach? than, How shall we choose?

The next considerations that will press upon the mother are the times, and the manner of this teaching in the things of God. It is better that these teachings be rare and precious than too frequent and slightly valued; better, not at all, than that the child should be surfeited with the mere sight of spiritual food, rudely served. At the same time, he must be built up in the faith, and his lessons must be regular and progressive. But everything depends upon the tact of the mother. Spiritual things, like the wafted odour of flowers, should depend on which way the wind blows. Every now and then there occurs a holy moment, felt to be holy by mother and child, when the two are together—that is the moment for some deeply felt and softly spoken word about God, such as the occasion gives rise to. Few words need be said, no exhortation at all; just the flash of conviction from the soul of the mother to the soul of the child. Is "Our Father" the thought thus laid upon the child's soul? There will be, perhaps no more than a sympathetic meeting of eyes hereafter, between mother and child, over a thousand showings forth of "Our Father's" love; but the idea is growing, becoming part of the child's spiritual life. This is all: no routine of spiritual teaching; a dread of many words which are apt to smother the fire of the sacred life; much self-restraint shown in the allowing of seeming opportunities to pass; and, all the time, earnest purpose of heart, and a definite scheme for the building up of the child in the faith. It need not be added that, to make another use of our Lord's words, "this kind cometh forth only by prayer." It is as the mother gets wisdom liberally from above, that she will be enabled for this Divine task.

A word about the reading of the Bible. I think we make a mistake in burying the text under our endless comments and applications. Also, I doubt if the picking out of individual verses, and grinding these into the child until they cease to have any meaning for him, is anything but a hindrance to the spiritual life. The Word is full of vital force, capable of applying itself. A seed, light as thistle-down, wafted into the child's soul, will take root downwards and bear fruit upwards. What is required of us is, that we should implant a love of the Word; that the most delightful moments of the child's day should be those in which his mother reads for him with sweet sympathy and holy gladness in voice and eyes, the beautiful stories of the Bible; and, now and then, in the reading will occur one of those convictions, passing from the soul of the mother to the soul of the child, in which is the life of the Spirit. Let the child grow so that—

"New thoughts of God, new hopes of heaven,"

are a joy to him, too,—things to be counted first amongst the blessings of a day. Above all, do not read the Bible at the child; do not let any words of the Scriptures be occasions for gibbeting his faults. It is the office of the Holy Ghost to convince of sin; and He is able to use the Word for this purpose without risk of that hardening of the heart in which our clumsy dealings too often result.

The matter for this teaching of Divine things will come out of every mother's own convictions. I have left myself time to speak of only one or two of those vital truths on which the spiritual life must sustain itself.

"Our Father, who is in heaven," is perhaps the first idea of God which the mother will present to her child—Father and Giver, straight from whom comes all the gladness of every day. "What a happy birthday our Father has given to my little boy! The flowers are coming again; our Father has taken care of the life of the plants all through the

winter cold! Listen to that skylark! It is a wonder how our Father can put so much joy into the heart of one little bird. Thank God for making my little girl so happy and merry!" Out of this thought comes prayer, the pre-utterance of the child's heart, more often in thanks for the little joys of the day counted up than in desire, just yet. The words do not matter; any little simple form the child can understand will do; the rising Godward of the little heart is the true prayer. Out of this thought, too, comes duty—the glad acknowledgment of the debt of service and obedience to a Parent so gracious and benign—not One who exacts service at the sword's point, as it were, but One whom His children will run to obey.

"Christ, our King." Here is a thought to unseal the fountains of love and loyalty, the treasures of faith and imagination, bound up in the child. The very essence of Christianity is personal loyalty, passionate loyalty to our adorable Chief. He have laid other foundations—regeneration, salvation, works, faith, the Bible—any or all of which may become a religion about Christ and without Christ. And now a time of sifting has come upon us, and thoughtful people decline to know anything about our religious systems; they write down all our orthodox beliefs as things *not knowable*. Perhaps this may be because, in thinking much of our salvation, we have put out of sight our King, the Divine fact which no soul of man to whom it is presented can ignore. In the idea of Christ is life; let that thought once get touch of the soul, and it rises up, a living power, independent of all formularies of the brain. Let us save Christianity for our children by bringing them into allegiance to Christ, the King. How? How did the old Cavaliers bring up sons and daughters in passionate loyalty and reverence for not too worthy princes? Their own hearts were full of it; their lips spake it; their acts proclaimed it; the style of their clothes, the ring of their voices, the carriage of their heads—all was one proclamation of boundless devotion to their king and his cause. That civil war, whatever else it did, or mis-deed doing, left a parable for Christian people. If a Stuart prince could command such measure of loyalty, what shall we say of "the Chief amongst ten thousand, the altogether lovely?"

Jesus, our Saviour: here is a thought to be brought tenderly before the child in the moments of misery that follow wrong-doing. "My poor little boy, you have been very naughty to-day! Could you not help it?" "No, mother," with sobs. "No, I suppose not; but there is a way of help." And then the mother tells her child how the Lord Jesus is our Saviour, because He saves us from our sins. It is matter of question when the child should first learn the "Story of the Cross." One thinks it would be very delightful to begin with Moses and the prophets; to go through the Old Testament history, tracing the gradual unfolding of the work and character of the Messiah; and then, when their minds are full of the expectation of the Jews, to bring before them the mystery of the birth in Bethlehem, the humiliation of the Cross. But perhaps no gain in freshness of presentation would make up to the children for having grown up with the associations of Calvary and Bethlehem always present to their minds. One thing in this connection: it is not well to allow the children in a careless familiarity with the Name of Jesus, or in the use of hymns whose tone is not irreverent. "Ye call Me Master and Lord; and ye say well, for so I am."

The indwelling of Christ is a thought particularly fit for the children, because their large faith does not stumble at the mystery, their imagination leaps readily to the marvel that the King Himself should inhabit a little child's heart. "How am I to know He is come, mother?" "When you are quite gentle, sweet, and happy, it is because Christ is within."

"And when He comes He makes your face so fair; Your friends are glad, and say, 'The King is there!'"

I will not attempt to indicate any more of the vital truths which the Christian mother will present to her child, having patience until they blossom and bear, and his soul is as a very fruitful garden which the Lord hath blessed. But, once more, "This kind cometh forth only by prayer."

## LECTURE VII.

### THE RELATIONS BETWEEN SCHOOL LIFE AND HOME LIFE—SCHOOL DISCIPLINE AND HOME TRAINING.

#### 1. School, a new Experience.

WHEN the child goes to school a new life begins for him; and not only so, but no change that may come to him afterwards will be in the same sense a new life. And for this reason: socially speaking, two lives are possible to us—private and public life; we live as members of a family and as members of a commonwealth. Hitherto the child has lived in the family; his duties have all been pretty plain, and his affection pretty fairly bestowed. Of course he loves and obeys his parents, more or less, and is fond of his brothers and sisters—there is no choice for him; and the law of the family and the love of the family follow him when he is allowed to mix with the outside world. "Mother says" is his law, "Father told me" his supreme authority. But

when he goes to school all that is changed: though he is still loving and dutiful towards those at home, other things have come in, and the child looks upon the world from a new standpoint. Parents may think, when they send their children to school, that the masters or mistresses and the studies are the points to be considered: that the children go to learn, *i.e.* to learn out of books, and that the heads of the school are for the time being in the place of parents to the children.

How far this may be true depends on another factor, sometimes left out of count, namely the "All the boys" and "All the girls" of schoolboy and schoolgirl phrase. The wise parent, in selecting a school for his child, is not satisfied to examine the syllabus and to know that the masters bear a high character; he sends out feelers to test the direction of public opinion in the school: if public opinion set with a strong current towards order, effort, virtue, that is the school for him; his boy, he is assured, once entered there, will be carried along towards the right. No doubt there will be a few turbulent spirits in every considerable school, and lawlessness is contagious, but the thing to find out is, how far the lead of the scapegraces is followed by the rest. But the direction of "public opinion," it is said, rests with the master. Not altogether: he will do his best to get it on his side; but he may be, like Dr. Arnold, of Rugby, years before he succeeds, and that, though he may have everything in his own character to fit him for the office of schoolmaster. We know, how little to be depended upon is public opinion in the world; far more, in the little world of school, it veers with every shifting of the wind, just because boys and girls are less reasonable, more emotional, than men and women. Yet, little as it is to be depended upon, this *vox populi* within the school governs the school, and the masters are nowhere except as they get it on their side. Now, this fact shows the real constitution and government of the school: the family is a limited monarchy, with sovereign parents; the school is a republic, with an elected president. Of course the master may hold his post in spite of the boys, but his authority and influence, the real matters in question, he only holds so far as they go with him; that is, so far as they elect him to administer their affairs.

Now, we see why it is that the child finds himself in a new and very stimulating element when he goes to school. For the first time, he has to find his footing amongst his equals. At home, he has seldom had more than one equal, and that his friend—the brother or sister next him in age. Here, he has a whole class of his fellows, some stronger, some weaker, than himself, working with him, shoulder to shoulder, running neck and neck with him in lessons and games. It is very exciting and delightful. The new boy catches the tone of the school: if the boys work, he works; if they dawdle, he dawdles,—unless he have been exceptionally well brought up. Happily, it is not too much to say that, as a rule, schoolboys and schoolgirls do work, in these days. Opinion is on the side of order and effort; and this for several reasons. It is not that the young people are better or more diligent than young people used to be, but more powerful incentives are put before them; in fact, the motives to work are stronger than the motives to idle.

#### 2. Examinations.

The Universities' Local, and other public examinations have effected a great change in the feeling of middle-class schools, both public and private, in this respect: it is possible to almost any boy or girl to get a distinction worth having, and enough care to make the effort to carry the rest along. Work is the order of the day: the desire of distinction, a strong spirit of emulation, stimulated by marks and prizes, do the work of government, and the teachers have little difficulty, except with the few rebellious spirits who decline to go the way of the others.

This looks so well on the face of it, that one asks, Is there nothing to set on the other side? But this much, at least, must be allowed by both utilitarian and moralist—that the habit of work, the power of work, rapidity in work, the set of the will to a given task, are "the making" of man and woman; that the boy who has done the definite work necessary to pass a given examination is, *other things being equal*, worth twenty per cent. more than he who has not been able to pull up his forces. But these "other things" must be looked into. Is the boy who prepares for a public examination—we are not speaking of prizes open only to a few, such as scholarships at the Universities, but of examinations where success is open to all who are up to a certain reasonable standard—is the boy who goes in for one of these in any respect at a disadvantage compared with him who does not?

Here comes in for consideration the question of "over-pressure," a possibility—too serious to be passed over without investigation—which parents naturally dread more for their girls than their boys. In the first place, work, regular disciplinary exercise, is so entirely wholesome for the brain, that girls, even more than boys, should be the better for definite work with a given object. It cannot be too strongly put that, as a matter of health, growing girls cannot put that, as a matter of health, growing girls cannot put that, as a matter of health, it is just as pernicious that they afford to be idle *mentally*; it is just as pernicious that they should dawdle through their lessons as that they should lounge through the day. There is no more effectual check to the tendency to hysteria and other nervous maladies

common to growing girls than the habit of steady brain-work. But, then, it must be work under conditions: fit quantities at fit times, with abundant leisure for exercise and recreation.

Now, the question is, Is it possible to prepare for an examination, say the Cambridge Local, Junior or Senior, under these conditions? For a girl of average intelligence, who has been fairly well taught up to her thirteenth or fourteenth year, it certainly is. It is not the steady work during the year that produces the symptoms of "brain-fag," but the few weeks of *exam* at the end, the struggle to go over the work of the year in a month or so, the excessive strain on the attention, the prolonged hours of study at the expense of play. This is, indeed, *overpressure*, and does harm. But it is unnecessary, because, as a matter of fact, it is useless; a name, or a date, a lucky shot or two, is all that comes of this senseless "grind." It is seldom that this kind of thing is done at the instance of teachers—the pupils invent the necessity for themselves and go to work blindly; and, therefore, parents can the more easily put it down, especially in day schools. It rests with them to say that their children shall go in for any examination, public or private, only on condition that no extra time is spent in study previous to the examination. Again, it is possible to reduce or increase the number of subjects—one language or more, one science or more—according to the power of the pupil. And, with these two precautions, there is no reason why the preparation for a public examination should do more than give the pupil a year's definite and wholesome work.

The next point to be considered is the quality of the work. There is no doubt that *definite* work, on a well-considered programme, with a given object in view, is a clear gain, leading to definiteness of purpose and concentration of effort and attention, the qualities that go to make a successful man. But what is to be said for the style of teaching, the method of study, encouraged by this system of school work organized with a view to public examinations? and with what is it to be compared? And, in the first place, is it not assuming too much to suppose that these examinations do tell very greatly on the general work of middle-class schools? The *Times*, the other day, spoke within the mark in saying that the Universities had entirely revolutionized the system of education in secondary schools by their "local examinations." It is not as if the regulations of the examining bodies affected only the few candidates; the whole of the first division of the school is worked upon the syllabus adopted; the second, the third, down to the lowest division, is worked *towards* that syllabus: that is, every pupil in the school gets the sort of teaching that will tell when his time comes to be examined; and, so soon as the work of the school begins to take hold of the child, he is making efforts towards this grand result. Nor did the *Times* say too much in praise of the impulse these examinations have given to secondary education, nor of the practical sterling value of the work obtained. It is a rare thing, now, to meet with a school of any standing which does not do thorough work, tested by the fact that it sends in candidates for some examination. One hears of schools which obtain telling results by a system of *exam*, of no educative worth at all; but, as a whole, middle-class schools have reached a fair average level—few are much better or much worse than the rest. It need not be so; a school was a place of real education or of miserable sham, according to the character of its head: but now, a scheme of work is prescribed; any man can see it carried out by assistants, if not by himself, and then his school is as good as another. In a word, the standing of a school no longer depends altogether upon force of character and organizing power in its principal.

This leveling tendency of our school routine has its disadvantages: it is not easy to produce individuality in either school or pupil under the present conditions. Individuality, character, culture,—public examinations, and a system of school work based on such examinations, must necessarily strike at the head of these. For what is it possible to examine upon, when the same examination is held simultaneously all over the empire—what the pupil *thinks*, or what he *knows*, what he has seen down in black and white? The latter, plainly, for it would be unfair to allow examiner or examinee any latitude of *opinion* in a matter that concerns so many. Therefore, *facts*, examinable matter, is the mental *pabulum* of the school life. If the master be given to discursive teaching, he pulls himself up, and sticks to facts; it is only upon matters of fact that it is possible to examine, and, therefore, it is upon his power of receiving, retaining, classifying, and producing facts that the pupil's success depends. There is no doubt that this fact-lore is an invaluable possession, and is the sort of knowledge which is power. But it is not culture; it does not, necessarily, produce a cultivated mind, the habits of reading and reflection:—

"A primrose by the river's brim  
A yellow primrose is to him,  
Is that, and nothing more!"—

he being the boy brought up with a view to successful examinations and who has not found for himself a way to get out of the groove of his work.

Again, the routine of school work becomes, at the same time, so mechanical and so incessant, there is so much hurry to get over the ground, so little leisure, so little opportunity

for the master to bring himself *en rapport* with his pupil, to feel, as it were, the moulding of the boy's character under his fingers, that there is no space for the more delicate moral training, the refining touch, which a man of superior parts should bestow upon his pupil. The work, the routine itself, affords bracing moral training. Diligence, exactness, persistence, steady concentrated effort, are not to be despised; but something more is wanted, not easy to define, to be got only in sympathetic intercourse with one's betters, morally and mentally, and this something is being pushed out in the press of work.

What is to be said then? Give up examinations, and let teachers and taught dawdle on in the old vague way? By no means: too much would be lost. Let the children go to schools as they now are, but withdraw them from examination? No, for the training schools offer now all hinges more or less upon the examinations, and if you do not get that, you get nothing in its place. But the thing is, to look the matter in the face: take the good the schools provide, and be thankful; take count of what they do not provide, and see that that culture and moral training which the schools fail to offer is to be had in the *home*.

### 3. The Playground.

This parental duty is the more to be insisted on, because school life is so *exigent* that the modern schoolboy or girl is nearly as much given up by parents as was the Spartan child of whom the State took possession. The boys and girls away at school are treated very much as visitors while at home, made much of at first, and then, before the long holidays are over, found slightly in the way; but it is not often that the parents take them under training as they do the young children who have not yet left the parent wing. The day school should offer the advantage of keeping the children constantly under home influence: but does it do so? As a matter of fact, are not the children so much occupied with school tasks, and their leisure taken up with school companions and school interests, that the parents gradually lose hold of them? Then, the young people set up a code of their own: "Oh, nobody does so!" "Nobody thinks so!" "All the boys" or "all the girls" say so and so, is supposed to settle most matters of discussion. And the worst of it is, many parents, with the diffidence of good people, are ready to believe that their children get something better at school than they have power to give, that, in fact, all proper and suitable training is given there, and they just make a merit of not interfering. This absorption in school life is the more complete because the young people are, for the time, conscious of no want that the school does not supply. *Work and play*, given these in due proportion and of the fitting kind, and life is delightful; and nowhere in the world are work and play so well balanced as in the school—the boy's school, at any rate; it is less easy to make provision for the play of girls. Parents prize the discipline of the playground almost as much as that of the school-room; and rightly so: not only for the unequalled physical training that the games afford, but for the "pluck" the "endurance," foresight, strength, and skill, the obedience to law, the deference to authority, the readiness to give place to the best man, the self-reliance, the faithfulness to each other, even in a bad cause, cultivated by means of the school games, with their laws, their captains, their contests, their rivalries. And what finer training could the boys have for a world in which "pluck" and temper win the prizes? One is half inclined to regret that the games of the girls, even when they adopt the very games of the boys, can hardly be taken in such terrible earnest, and, therefore, do not exercise the same discipline: but, up to the present time at any rate, life does not offer such rough usage to the girls as to the boys, and, therefore, the same training to hardihood is not called for. The influence which these organizations for play have on the characters of boys is not to be measured. Athletic and, at the same time, thoughtful young masters perceive that, if they are to influence the boys, it must be as they are able to make a good figure in the playground, and thereby show that they are in sympathy with the prime interests of a boy's life. So of friendship, comradeships, it is in the playground the boy finds his ideal of manly excellence, the example he sets himself to follow.

### 4. School Government.

The playground does invaluable work, and has much to do with the making of what is best and most characteristic in Englishmen; but, indeed, the training of the playground, as that of the school-room, is incomplete. The fact is, that the discipline of school-room and playground alike is largely carried on by stimulating and balancing, one against another, those desires which are common to us all as human beings—the desires of power, of society, of esteem, of knowledge, of mere animal activity, of excelling the rest, of work, or action, even avarice—the desire of wealth. Here is a formidable list; and it is quite possible, by playing upon and adjusting these natural desires, to govern a human being so that he may make a respectable figure in the world with little sense of duty, feeble affections, and dispositions left to run wild, wanting the culture which should train mere *disposition* into *character*. Now, this way of governing a human being through his desires is the easiest in the world. The nurse knows it very well; his desire of praise, or play,

or lollipops leaves something always in her hands wherewith to reward the child's good behaviour. When attempts are made to stimulate people *en masse*, it is through their desires. They want work or play or power, money or land, and whoever plays upon any one of these desires gets the popular ear. Because this government through the desires is the easiest kind of government, it is the most common, in the school as elsewhere; prizes, praise, place, success, distinction, whether in games or examinations, these are enough to keep a school going with such vigour, such *éclat*, that nobody is conscious of the want of the springs of action. All these desires are right in themselves, within certain limits, and we may believe they were implanted in us as spurs to progress; the man who has no desire of wealth, no ambition, does not help himself and the world forward as does he who has these desires. Again, in the school, the desires are, on the whole, well regulated, one brought into play against another, and the result is, such sturdy qualities, sterling virtues, as "make a man" of the boy brought under school discipline. The weak place is, that boys and girls are treated too much "in the rough," without regard to the particular tendencies in each which require repression, or direction, or encouragement. The vain girl is made vainer, the diffident is snubbed: there is no time to hand a crutch to the lame, to pick up the stumbling. All must keep the pace or drop out of the race. Then, it is astonishing how crude may be the character, how unformed the principles, how undeveloped the affections towards country, kindred, or kind, after a most successful school career: the reason being, that the principle of government through the desires has left these things out of count.

There are schools and schools; schools where mental discipline of the highest kind is combined with conscientious development of the character of the individual boy, and with such spiritual insight and teaching as help him into the better life: but such schools are not to be found in every street, and parents would do well not to take it for granted that it is one of these their boy attends; better to take the school for what it is worth, thankful for the training it does afford; to look its deficiencies in the face, and take pains to supply by means of *home* training what the school fails to give.

### 5. Girls' Schools.

The girls are, on the whole, worse off than the boys, as regards what they get out of school life. There is an element of generosity, of free and friendly "give and take" in the boys' games which is wanting to the girls. Beautiful and lasting girl friendships are formed in most schools, but the girls do not always do each other good; perhaps because they are more delicate, nervous, and, consequently, irritable, by organization than the boys, they often enough contrive to get the worst and not the best out of each other. They have not the common bond which the boys find in their games, and their alliance rest upon talk, which too often turns into gossip, possibly into unwholesome gossip. A girl of fine, pure, noble character is like salt which seasons a whole school, and such girls are, happily, plentiful enough; but it is well parents should bear the other possibility in mind, that their daughters may be thrown amongst girls, not vicious, but with nothing in them, who will bring her down to their commonplace level. Because girls, constitutionally sensitive, are open to the small envyings and jealousies, "cliquishness," which hinder them from getting all the good they should of each other's society, they are the more dependent on the character of their head, and on their opportunities of getting touch with her. If she be a woman of clear and vigorous mind, high principles, and elevated character, it is astonishing how all that is lovely in the feminine character is drawn as by a magnet, and the girls about her mould themselves, each according to her own nature, and yet each after the type of the mistress, the "sympathy of numbers" spurring them on towards virtue, and each—

"Emulously rapid in the race."

Given, to adapt words used in describing Dr. Low-Carpenter as a schoolmaster, a woman with a power of "commanding the reverence and reconstituting the wills" of her pupils, of "great and varied intellectual power, with profound sense of right pervading the whole life and conversation, with the insight derived from a thorough and affectionate sympathy with (girl) nature," and she will "daily achieve triumphs which most teachers would believe impossible;" above all will this be true if she succeed in putting into the hands of her pupils the key to the spiritual life. Such a woman gets all that is beautiful in girl-nature on her side—its enthusiasm, humility, deference, devotion: love works wonders, and the parents see their daughter growing under their eyes into the perfect woman that every mother longs to see in her child. But schoolmistresses, as schoolmasters, of this type are rare; and, indeed, it is as well they are, for if the parents' highest functions are to be fulfilled by outsiders, what is left for father and mother to do? Parents will, no doubt, take care to place their daughters under generally estimable women, and, having done that, they will estimate the training the school affords at its value, and endeavour to supplement it at home. How great the value of school discipline is to girls, they can appreciate who have had experience of the vagueness, inaccuracy, want of

application, desultoriness, want of conscience about their work, dawdling habits of young women brought up at home under the care of governesses. Of course there are exceptions, governesses and governesses, and girls often fare well when their fathers have a hand in their education; but, for habits of work, power of work, conscientious endeavours in her work, the faithful schoolgirl is far before the girl who has not undergone school discipline.

### 6. Home Training—Physical.

It is not necessary to discuss here the respective merits of large and small schools, of day and boarding schools. We may assume at once that the discipline of the school is so valuable that the boy or girl who grows up without it is at a disadvantage through life; while, at the same time, the training of the school is so far defective that, left to itself, it turns out very imperfect, inadequate human beings. The point for our consideration is, that the duty of the parents to *educate* their child is by no means at an end when he enters upon school life; because it rests with them to supplement what is weak or wanting in the training of the school.

Now, as hitherto, education has a fourfold bearing—on the body, the mind, the moral, and the spiritual nature of the pupil. As far as physical education goes, the parent who has boys at school may sit at his ease; they are as fish in the water, in the native element of that well-regulated animal activity which should train them up towards a vigorous, capable, and alert manhood.

The schoolboy is so well off in the matter of physical training, that the rest of the world may well envy him. But the schoolgirl is less fortunate; her chief dependence is upon dancing and calisthenics; and some of the severer kinds of gymnastics cannot be attempted without risk by girls in their "teens." Little provision is made in their case, as in that of the boys, for thorough abandonment to games as part of the business of life. If they have tennis courts, only a few can play; if they have playgrounds, the games are haphazard affairs, and the girls are not encouraged to a healthful exercise of their lungs. Day schools can seldom undertake to make full provision for the physical development of the girls, and, therefore, that duty falls back upon the parents. Hoop, skipping-rope, shuttle-cock, rounders, with tennis in addition for the elders, cannot be too much encouraged. Long country walks with an object, say the getting of botanical specimens, should be promoted, on at least two days in a week. Every day, two or three hours in the open air should be secured, and, when that is not possible, on account of the weather, the evening should end with a carpet dance, or with good romping games. Where is the time to come from? That is a question requiring serious consideration on the part of mothers, on whose good management it must depend if their children are to grow up with the sense of leisure, which should be a prerogative of youth. For it is very true that the time of the girls is too fully occupied, and it is only by careful mapping out that enough *growing-time* can be secured for them. Say their waking-day is fourteen hours long, from seven in the morning till nine at night: something like five hours will be spent in the school-room—goings and comings count for open-air exercise, though not of the best; from an hour to an hour and a half will be required for home work "preparations;" an hour, at least, for "practice" on the piano; two hours for meals, an hour for dressing, etc., and three hours and a half is all that is left upon the closest calculation, and two hours and a half of this should be given up without stint to the girls' physical culture and amusement. The younger children, who have fewer or no home-tasks, and take less time for practising, will have the more for play. But if the schoolgirl is to get two or three hours intact, she will owe it to the mother's firmness as much as to her good management. In the first place, that the school tasks be done, and done well, in the assigned time, should be a most fixed law. The young people will maintain that it is impossible; but let the mother insist: she will thereby cultivate the habit of *attention*, the very key to success in every pursuit, as well as secure for her children's enjoyment the time they would dissipate if left to themselves. It seldom happens that home work is given which should occupy more than an hour to an hour and a half, and a longer time is spent in the habit of mental dawdling—a real wasting of brain substance. It is a mistake to suppose that efforts in this direction run counter to the intentions of the teacher; on the contrary, the greatest impediment they meet with is that mental inertness in the children which will rather dawdle for an hour over a task than brace the attention for five minutes' steady effort.

Firmness on the mother's part in enforcing promptness—in the taking off and putting on of outdoor clothes, etc.,—and punctuality at meals, and in not allowing one occupation to overlap another, secures many a half-hour of pleasant leisure for the young people, and has the double advantage of making them feel themselves under a firm *home* rule.

### 7. Home Training—Intellectual.

The intellectual training of the young people must be left, in the main, to the school authorities. It is useless to remark further upon the subjects or the methods of study; the schoolmaster settles all that, and he, as we have seen, is greatly influenced by the lines laid down by certain examining bodies. Even where the teaching of the school

is not satisfactory, there is little to be done: there is neither time nor opportunity for any other direct mental training; and to attempt it, or to criticize unfavourably the working of the school, has a bad effect on the pupil—he learns to undervalue what his school has to give him, and gets nothing else. But between two evils, he falls to the ground. But teachers, they may do much by playing into their hands. It is important that parents should, as far as possible, keep up with their children, should know where they are and how they are getting on in their studies, should look into their books, give an eye to their written work, be ready with an opinion, a hint, a word of encouragement. They should feel and show hearty interest in the matter of their children's studies, and, when the subject is less dry than the declension of a Latin noun, should throw side lights upon it by making it a matter of table-talk. And this for a double reason,—both as holding up the hands of the schoolmaster, and as strengthening their own. Parents little know how far a word of interest from them goes to convert the dead into a living idea, never to be lost; and there is no excuse left for getting rusty in these days of many books. The schoolmaster reaps the benefit of such efforts—his task is lightened; he has to teach boys capable of responding: but of more consequence is it that the parents themselves keep their place in this way as heads of the family. They keep the respect of their children; and once a boy begins to look down on the intellectual status of his parents, the entire honour and deference he owes them are at an end. Any pains taken to keep ahead should be repaid by the flow of honest pride the young people feel at every proof of intellectual power in their parents.

#### 8. Home Training—Moral.

(a) *Honour towards Parents.*—This brings us to the consideration of that education in morals which the young people must get at home, or not at all. The chief of their duties, that which should be kept always before the young, is the duty they owe to their parents; from this stem, all other duties, to kindred, commonwealth, and neighbours, branch out: and more, they only perceive their obligations to Almighty God in proportion as they know what they owe to their human parents. Now, parents do not always think wisely on this subject. There is a feeling abroad, that the behaviour of a child to his parent is a matter between those two alone; that if the parent choose to absolve his child from any close confidence, from obedience, respectful demeanour,—that is his business; he has as much right to do so, as the slave-owner has to manumit his slaves. At the same time, two other notions prevail,—that the kindest and best thing parents can do by their children is to give them "a good time," as the Americans put it; and that the children of these days are so much in advance of anything that went before them, that it is rather absurd to keep them in subordination to parents not half so clever as themselves. The outcome of these three popular fallacies is, that many parents give up the strict government of their children at a very early age—so soon, that is, as the school steps in to take possession: lax discipline, imperfect confidence, free and easy manners, the habit of doing that which is right in their own eyes, are permitted to grow up. That schoolboys and girls should be thus thrown upon their own government is a blow to the interests of society, and a great loss to themselves—the loss of that careful moral training which it is the bounden duty of their parents to afford, throughout school life at any rate, and through the two or three years that follow it. The problem is, how to maintain due parental dignity, to repress anything like a "hail, fellow, well met" style of address, and yet to keep up the flow of affectionate intimacy and confidence. This is the secret of home government—put the child into the attitude of a receiver, the parent into that of an imparter, not merely of physical care and comfort, but of a careful and regular training for the responsibilities of life, and the rest comes easy. The difficulty is that many parents find it hard to maintain this superiority to their children as the latter advance in age, and set up other standards than those of home. They possibly feel themselves less clever, less worthy, than some others with whom their children come in contact: they are too honest to assume a dignity to which they doubt their right, so they step down from the rostrum, and stand on the same level as their children, willing to owe to affection and good nature the consideration which is their lawful due. Very likely such parents are not less, but more worthy than the person they give place to: but that is not the question; they are invested with an official dignity; it is in virtue of their office, not of personal character, that they are and must remain superior to their children, until these become of an age to be parents in their turn. And parents are invested with this dignity, that they may be in a position to instruct their children in the art of living. Now, office in itself adds dignity irrespective of personal character; so much so, that the judge, the bishop, who does not sustain his post with becoming dignity has nothing to show for himself. So of the parent; if he forego the respectful demeanour of his children, he might as well have disgraced himself before their eyes, for, in the one case as the other, he loses his power to instruct them in the art and science of living, which is his very *raison d'être* in the divine economy.

If parents put it to themselves that their relation to their children is not an accident, but is a real office which they have been appointed to fill, they would find it easier to assume the dignity of persons called upon to represent a greater than themselves. The parent who feels that he has a Power behind him,—that he is, strictly, no more than the agent of Almighty God appointed to bring the children under the divine government, does not behave with levity and weakness, and holds his due position in the family, as a trust which he has no right to give up.

And now, given, the parents in their due position as heads of the family, and all the duties and affections which belong to the family flow out from that one principle as light from a sun. The parents are able to show continual tenderness and friendliness towards their children, without partiality and without weak indulgence. They expect, and therefore get, faithful and ready obedience. Their children trust them entirely, and therefore bestow confidence, and look for counsel. Of course their children treat them with due honour and respect. There is a spurious dignity, which sometimes brings the parental character into discredit: a selfish and arbitrary parent requires much from and gives little to his children, treating them *de haut en bas*; the children rebel, and set up their claims in opposition to those of their parents. But cases of this kind do not touch the point. No child resists the authority of a parent who consistently and lovingly acts—the agent of a higher authority. He is all the more a sovereign because he is recognized as a deputy sovereign.

But there are times when the "relations are strained;" and, of these, the moment when the child feels himself consciously a member of the school republic is one of the most trying. Now all the tact of the parents is called into play. Now, more than ever, is it necessary that the child should be aware of the home authority, just that he may know how he stands, and how much he is free to give to the school. "Oh, mither, why gar ye no' mak' me do it?" was the cry of a poor ne'er-do-weel Scotch laddie who had fallen into disgrace through neglect of his work; and that is just what every schoolboy or schoolgirl has a right to say who does not feel the pressure of a firm hand at home during the period of school life. They have a right to turn round and reproach their parents for almost any failure in probity or power in after life. But no mere assertion of authority will do: it is the old story of the sun and the wind and the traveller's cloak. It is in the force of almighty gentleness that parents are supreme: not feebleness, not inertness, there is no strength in these; but purposeful, determined gentleness, which carries its point only, "for it is right." "The servant of God must not strive," was not written for bishops and pastors alone, but is the secret of strength for every "bishop," or overlooker, of a household.

(b) *Gratitude towards Parents.*—The parent will find that, for the sake of his child, tasks of some delicacy fall to him, which would be almost impossible as between man and man, and even in the relations of parent and child require tact and discrimination. For instance, he must foster gratitude in his child. There is nothing left to be said for the ungrateful person: even among the ancients, ingratitude was held heinous. And yet, what in the world is more natural than to take benefits as matters of course, our own due, and the duty of those who bestow them? We think so highly of our own deservings, are so unready to put ourselves in the place of another and see at what cost he is kind, that certainly gratitude is not a wild fruit in the soil of the human heart. Now, no one can ever owe so much to any living soul as to devoted parents; and if the man is to experience the holy emotions of gratitude, it is as these same parents cultivate in him the delightful sense of their love and their never-failing kindness.

It is a pity—but so it is—the children are so obtuse that they think no more of their parents' kindness as a personal matter than they do of sunshine or flowers, or any other pleasant thing in life. A mother sits up till midnight darning stockings for her boys; she says nothing about it, and the boys put their stockings on, scarcely knowing whether they are in holes or not. But, "how hateful to be always reminding the children of such things, with a 'There now, see how I've had to work for you! I hope the time will come when you will do as much for me.'" Hatred, indeed; and most mischievous; that sort of thing not only irritates the hearer, but cancels the debt. But gentle rallying on "those great holes which kept poor mother up till midnight," with a "Never mind, my boy; you know work for you is pleasure to your mother," sinks deep, and the boy is not worth his salt who, after that, does not mean to buy his mother silks and satins, gold and jewels, "when I'm a man!" If ever it is necessary to pinch, to do without things for the children's sake, let them know it: but do not repress them with it; do not treat it as a hardship, but as a pleasure, for their sakes. That is, it is lawful for parents to bring their good deeds before their children as a child offers a flower to his mother, as a show of love, but not as a demand for service. For gratitude is nothing else but a movement of love, and only love kindles love.

(c) *Kindness and Courtesy.*—So of the other manifestations of love—kindness, courtesy, friendliness; these the parents must get from their children, not upon demand, but as love constrains them. Make occasions for services, efforts,

offerings; let the children feel that their kindness is a power in the lives of their parents. I know of a girl upon whom it dawned for the first time, when she was far in her "teens," that she had any power to gratify her mother. Do not let the little common courtesies and attentions of daily life slip—the placing of a chair, the standing aside or falling behind at proper times, the attentive eye at table, the attentive ear and ready response to questions or directions. Let the young people feel that the omission of these things causes pain to loving hearts, that the doing of them is as cheering as the sunshine; and if they forget sometimes, it will only be that they forget, not that they are unwilling, or look upon the amenities of life as "all bosh!"

Again, let there be a continuous flow of friendliness, graciousness, the pleasantness of eye and lip, between parent and child. Let the boy perceive that a bright eye-to-eye "Good morning, mother," is gladness to her, and that a cold greeting with averted face is like a cloud between his mother and the sun. Parents are inclined to drop these things because they are unwilling to take even their own children by the throat, with a "Pay me that thou owest;" but that is not the way to look at the matter; it is not a personal question at all. Wordsworth has a deeply suggestive little poem illustrating what I mean:—

"There is a change—and I am poor;  
Your love hath been, my long ago,  
A fountain at my fond heart's door,  
Whose only business was to flow;  
And flow it did; not taking heed  
Of its own bounty, or my need.  
"What happy moments did I count!  
Blest was I then, all bliss above!  
Now, for this consecrated fount  
Of murmuring, sparkling, living love,  
What have I—shall I dare to tell?  
A comfortless and hidden well.  
"A well of love—it may be deep;  
I trust it is,—and never dry;  
What matter? if the waters sleep  
In silence and obscurity.  
Such change, and at the very door  
Of my fond heart, hath made me poor."

There is, in the heart of every child, a fountain of love,

"Whose only business is to flow;"

and this it is the part of the parents to keep unsealed, unchoked, and flowing forth perennially in the appointed channels of kindness, friendliness, courtesy, gratitude, obedience, service. Keep the fountain flowing, and it will gladden not only the parents, towards whom is the first rush of the current, but all about them and beyond them—the family, the household, friends, kindred, school-fellows, neighbours, the needy, the world, as far as it can reach. But let the spring be choked in its rise, in its natural outlet towards parents, and the chances are it is lost, a mere buried well of love. How is the fountain to be kept aflow? Partly by this method of the poet's "*Complaint*." Let son and daughter perceive the gladness which every outgoing of their love produces—the cloud that falls on the parent's heart when the love of the child is restrained. Natural reticence and pride incline us to take the "bounty" of the children's love for granted, and to make no sign of the pain caused by their thoughtless omissions. But these barriers of reserve should be broken down for the sake of the children, and they should be permitted to see, so far as possible, what is in the hearts of their parents towards them. And this, because no education tells so much, Godward or manward, as this education of the power of loving.

Another point to be borne in mind is, that love grows, not by what it gets, but by what it gives. Therefore, the young people must not get out of the habit of rendering services of love. There is danger of confounding mere affection, a more or less animal emotion, showing itself in coaxing and fondling, in "Mother, darling," "Father, dear," and—no more, with love, which, however affectionate it be in word and gesture, does not rest in these, but must exhibit itself in service. The little children are demonstrative, ready to give and take caresses, "loving" in their ways; but the boys and girls have, partly out of *gaucherie*, partly from a growing instinct of reticence, changed all that. They want at this awkward stage of life a great deal of tact and tenderness at the hands of their parents, and the channels of service, friendliness, and obedience must be kept visibly open for the love which will no longer flow in undercurrents.

#### The Awkward Age.

Indeed this, of the growing boy or girl, is not only an awkward, but a critical stage of life. For the first time, the young people are greatly occupied with the notion of their own rights: their duties are nowhere. Not what they owe, but what is due to them, it is that oppresses their minds. "It's a shame," "It's not fair," "It's too bad," are muttered in secret, when no one ventures to murmur aloud,—and this, with aggravating unreasonableness, and a "one-sidedness" which grown-up people can hardly understand. But this tiresome behaviour does not arise from any moral twist in the young people; they really have more right than reason on their side: their claims might often be yielded, if there were none but themselves to consider. What they want is, to have their eyes opened that they may see the rights of others as clearly as their own; and their reason culti-

vated, that they may have power to weigh the one against the other. The aggressiveness of the young people is not mere naughtiness. They must be met on their own ground. Care must be taken not to offend their exaggerated sense of justice as to all that affects themselves. They must get the immunities they can fairly claim; and their parents must be at the trouble to convince them, with good humour, when they are clearly in the wrong.

In the mean time the state of feeling must be dealt with which would lead a boy to say, "I shan't," if he dared. He must be reached through his affections: the very feelings which make him offensive when centred upon himself, are beautiful and virtuous when they flow in the channels of justice and benevolence towards others. And this is a change not only possible, but easy and pleasant for parents to bring about. The feelings are there already; the strong sense of justice, and the love, which has become exaggerated self-love only because the attention has been allowed to fix upon self and its claims to the exclusion of others. It rests with the parent to draw the attention from self to other people, and the affections will flow in that direction to which the attention is turned. For instance, let the young people feel that the happiness of home is a trust which every member of it has in charge; that the child who sits down to table with a sullen face destroys for the time the whole happiness of his whole family, just as a hand-breadth held close to the eyes will shut out the whole light of the sun. What is it that makes the happiness of every day; great treats, great successes, great delights? No, but constant friendly looks and tones in those about us, their interest and help in our pursuits, their service and pity when we are in difficulty and trouble. No home can be happy if a single member allow himself in ugly tempers and behaviours. By degrees, great sensitiveness to the moral atmosphere of the home will be acquired; the happiness of a single day will come to be regarded as a costly vase which any clumsy touch may overthrow. Now the attention is taken off self and its claims, and fixed upon brother and sister, father and mother, servants and neighbours, so slight a thing as a friendly look can add to the happiness of every one of these. Affection flows naturally towards those to whom we can give happiness. A boy who feels himself of little account in his family will give all his heart to his dog; he is necessary to Puck's happiness at any rate; and, as for the dog,—"I think it is wrong to let children have dogs. It spoils them for mankind," says the late Lord Lytton. Let the boy have his dog, but let him know to how many others even a pleasant word from him gives happiness for the moment. Benevolence, the delight in giving happiness, is a stream which swells as it flows. The boy who finds he really can make a difference to his home, is on the look-out for chances. A hint as to what father or sister would like is no hardship to him when he is not "bothered" into it, but produces it of his own free will. Like begets like. The kindness he shows is returned to him, and, by him, returned again, full measure, pressed down, and running over. He looks, not on his own things, but on the things of others. His love of justice shows in the demand of "fair play" for others now: he will not hear others spoken ill of in their absence, will not assign unworthy motives, or accuse another easily of unworthy conduct; he is just to the conduct, the character, the reputation of others. He puts himself involuntarily in the place of the other, and judges as he would be judged.

"Teach me to feel another's woe,  
To hide the faults I see;  
That mercy I to others show,  
That mercy show to me!"

is his unformed, unconscious prayer. His benevolence, again, his kindness, will reach, not only to the distresses of others, but will show itself in forbearance towards tiresome tempers, in magnanimity in the forgiveness of injuries. His habits of kind and friendly behaviour will, by degrees, develop into principles of action; until, at last, his character is established, and he comes to be known as a just and virtuous man. Towards this great result, the parents have no more to do than to keep the channels open, and direct the streams; to draw the attention of their son to the needs and the claims of others, and to point out to him from time to time the ways in which he holds the happiness of others in his hands. It is needless to say how a selfish or worldly maxim thrown in—"Take care of yourself," "Look after your own interests," "Give tit for tat,"—may obstruct the channel or choke the spring. But it is nothing new to us to learn that—

"As every rainbow has its light,  
So every grace is love."

#### 9. Home Training—Religious.

With regard to the training of the young in the religious life, I am chiefly anxious to call your attention to the power and beauty of a holy youth. We are content, in this matter, with too low a standard for the children as for ourselves, looking for less than that which many a beautiful child attains in his degree—a life "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners."—

"Who almeth at a star,  
Shoots higher, far,  
Than he who means a tree."

As for the few practical hints I shall venture to offer, they are in this, as in other matters of education, only what thoughtful mothers already carry out.

In the first place, "every word of God" is the food of the spiritual life; and these words come to us most freely in the moments we set apart in which to recollect ourselves, to read, say our prayers. Such moments in the lives of young people are apt to be furtive and hurried; it is well to secure for them the necessary leisure—a quiet twenty minutes, say, —and that, early in the evening; for the fat end of the day is not the best time for its most serious affairs. I have known happy results where it is the habit of the young people to retire for a little while, when their wits are fresh, and before the work or play of the evening has begun.

Again, the Christian life should be a *progressive* life. The boy should not be allowed to feel himself like a door on its hinges, always swinging over the same ground. New and definite aims, thoughts, subjects of prayer, should be set before him week by week, that "something attempted, something done," may give him courage; and that, suppose he is harassed by failure, he may try in a new direction with new hope. Even those who do not belong to the Church of England would find her Sunday collects, epistles, and gospels helpful, as giving the young people something definite to think about, week by week. We can hardly hope in this life to grow up to all there is in those weekly portions, but the youngest Christian finds enough to go on with, and has the repose of being led, step by step, in his heavenly progress. I am not suggesting this as a substitute for wider reading of the Bible, only as a definite thought, purpose, and prayer for every week as it comes, in addition to whatever other prayers general or special needs may call for. The bringing of the thought of the collect and its accompanying scriptures home will afford occasion for a few earnest words, week by week, not to be readily forgotten. And this in itself is a gain, for we all experience some difficulty in speaking of the best things to the people we live amongst, especially to the young people.

Only one point more—a word as to the manner of keeping Sunday in the family. Do not let the young people feel themselves straightened by narrow views: give them freely the broad principle that what is right on Saturday is right on Sunday—right, but not convenient; the Sunday has pursuits of its own; and we are no more willing to give up any part of it to the grind of the common business or the common pleasures of life, than the schoolboy is to give up a holiday to the grind of school-work. Even for selfish reasons of health and comfort, we cannot afford to give up the repose to body, mind, and spirit which we owe to the change of thought and occupations the day brings.

Having made the principle of Sunday-keeping plain, make the practice pleasant. Let it be a joyous day—everybody in his best temper and gentlest manners. Put anxious cares aside on Sunday, for the children's sakes; and if there be no "vain deluding mirth," let there be gaiety of heart and talk.

Let the day be full of its own special interests and amusements. An hour's reading aloud, from Sunday to Sunday, of a work of real power or interest—Stanley's "Jewish," and "Eastern Churches," Livingstone's "Journeyings," "Friends in Council,"—any good well-written book, would add to the interest of Sunday afternoon. The family reading should supply a pleasant intellectual stimulus.

A little poetry may well be got in; there is time to digest it on Sunday; not only George Herbert, Vaughan, Keble, but Cowper, Wordsworth, Milton, Lowell—any poet who feeds the heart with wise thoughts, and does not too much disturb the peace of the day with the stir of life and passion. The point in the Sunday readings and occupations is, to keep the heart at peace and the mind alive and receptive, open to any holy impression which may come from above, whether in the fields or by the fireside. It is not that we are to be seeking, making efforts all day long, in church and out of it. We may rest altogether, in body and spirit: on condition that we do not become engrossed, that we keep ourselves open to the influences which fall in unexpected ways. This thought determines the choice of the Sunday story-book. Any pure, thoughtful study of character, earnest picture of life, will do to carry our thoughts upward, though the Divine name be not mentioned; but tales full of affairs and adventures, or tales of passion, are hardly to be chosen.

It is unadvisable to put twaddling "goody-goody" story-books into the hands of the young people: a revulsion of taste will come, and then the weakness of this sort of literature will be laid to the charge of religion. Music in the family is the greatest help towards making the Sabbath a delight; it is, however, a pity when operatic music, with its associations of passion and unrest, is played on the Sunday, when it is hardly too much to say that the greatest works of the greatest masters are consecrated to the service of religion.

"The liberal soul deviseth liberal things," is a safe rule once the principle is recognized, the purpose and meaning of the Sunday rest. I venture to enter so fully into this subject because the question of Sunday observance is one which comes up to be settled between the parents and every growing-up family.

Although any attempt at intellectual training must be abandoned by the parents once their children go to school, intellectual culture is a different matter, and this the young people must get at home, or nowhere. By this sort of culture one means, not so much the getting of knowledge, nor even getting the power to learn, but the cultivation of the power to appreciate, to enjoy, whatever is just, true, and beautiful in thought and expression. For instance, one man reads—

"... He lay along,  
Under an oak, whose antique root peeps out  
Upon the brook that brawls along this wood;  
To the which place a poor sequester'd stag,  
That from the hunter's aim had ta'en a hurt,  
Did come to languish;—"

and gets no more out of it than the four facts of the reclining man, the oak, the brook, and the wounded stag. Another reads, and gets these and something over—a delicious mental image, and a sense of exquisite pleasure in the *putting* of the thought, the mere ordering of the words. Now, the second has, other things being equal, a hundred-fold the means of happiness which the first enjoys; he has a sixth sense, a new inlet of pleasure, which adds enjoyment to every hour of his life. If people are to live in order to get rich, rather than to enjoy satisfaction in the living, they can do very well without intellectual culture; but if we are to make the most of life as the days go on, then it is a duty to put this power of getting enjoyment into the hands of the children. They must be educated up to it. Some children take to books as ducks to the water; but delight in a fine thought, well set, does not come by nature. Moreover, it is not the sort of thing that the training of the schools commonly aims at; to turn out men and women with enough exact knowledge for the occasions of life, and with wits on the alert for chances of promotion, that is what most schools pretend to, and, indeed, do accomplish. The contention of scholars is, that a classical education does more, turns out men with intellects cultivated and trained, awake to every refinement of thought, and ready for action. But the press and hurry of our times, and the clamour for useful knowledge, are driving classical culture out of the field; and parents will have to make up their minds, not only that they must supplement the moral training of the school, but must supply the intellectual culture, without which knowledge may be power, but is not pleasure, nor the means of pleasure. There is little opportunity to give this culture to the boy taken up with his school and its interests; the more reason, therefore, to make the most of the little: for when the boy leaves school, he is in a measure set—his thoughts will not readily run in new channels. The business of the parent is to keep up right-of-way to the pleasant places provided for the faded brain. Nothing helps in this so much as a family habit of reading aloud. Even a dry book is interesting when everybody listens, while a work of power and interest becomes delightful when eye meets eye at the telling lines.

There are few stronger family bonds than this habit of devoting an hour to reading aloud, on winter evenings, at any rate. The practice is pleasant at the time, and pleasant in the retrospect: giving occasion for much bright talk, merry and wise, and quickening family affection by means of intellectual sympathy. Indeed, the wonder is that any family should neglect such a simple means of pure enjoyment, and of moral, as well as intellectual culture. But this, of reading aloud, is not a practice to be taken up and laid down at pleasure. Let the habit drop, and it is difficult to take it up again, because every one has, in the mean time, struck a vein of intellectual entertainment for himself—whimsy stuff, it may be,—which makes him an unwilling listener to the family "book." No; let an hour's reading aloud be a regular part of the winter "evening at home," and everybody will look forward to it as a hungry boy looks for his dinner.

#### The Art of Reading Aloud.

If reading is to be pleasant to the listeners, the reading itself must be distinct, easy, and sympathetic. And here is something more which parents must do for their children themselves, for nobody else will get them into the habit of reading for the pleasure of other people from the moment when they can read fluently at all. After indistinct and careless enunciation, perhaps the two most trying faults in a reader are, the slowness which does not see what is coming next, and stumbles over the new clause, and the habit of gasping, like a fish out of water, several times in the course of a sentence.

The last fault is easy of cure: "Never breathe through the lips, but always through the nostrils in reading," is a safe rule: if the lips be closed in the act of taking breath, enough air is inhaled to inflate the lungs, and supply "breath" to the reader; if an undue supply is taken in by mouth and nostrils both, the inconvenience is caused which relieves itself in gasps.

The stumbling reader spoils his book from sheer want of attention. He should train himself to look on, to be always a line in advance, so that he may be ready for what is coming. Faults in enunciation should be dealt with one by one. For instance, one week, everybody takes pains to secure the "d" in "and;" the other letters will take care of

themselves, and the less they are heard, the better. Indeed, if the final consonants are secured, *d, t, and ng*, especially, the reading will be distinct and finished.

Another advantage of the family lecture is, that it enables parents to detect and correct provincialisms—the Yorkshire fashion of emphasizing *con* and *com*, for instance, in content, commission, consideration, etc. For the rest, practice makes perfect. Let everybody take his night or his week for reading, with the certainty that the pleasure of the whole family depends on his reading well.

#### The Book for the Evening Lecture.

Now, for the consideration of the book. Sir John Lubbock's *hundred* has produced numerous lists of the "hundred best books"—none of them satisfactory. To attempt a list of books suitable for the family lecture would be as hopeless as it is unnecessary; but it is possible to discuss the principles on which the selection should be made. In the first place, to get information is not the object of the family reading, but to make the young people acquainted with the flavour of, to give them a *taste* for a real "book"—that is, roughly speaking, a work of so much literary merit, that it should be read and valued for the sake of that alone, whatever its subject-matter.

This rule makes a clean sweep of the literature to be found in nine houses out of ten—twaddling story-books, funny or "good;" worthless novels; second-rate writing, whether in works of history or general literature; compendiums, abstracts, short sketches of great lives, useful information in whatever form. None of these should be admitted to the evening lecture, and, indeed, the less they are read at all, the better. A good encyclopedia is an invaluable store-house of facts, and should be made use of to elucidate every difficulty that occurs in general reading; and information got in this way, at the moment it is wanted, is remembered; but it is a mistake to read for information only.

Next, the book must be *interesting*; amusing or pathetic, as may be, but not too profound: the young people have been grinding all day, and now they want relaxation. One is sorry for girls and boys who do not hear the Waverley novels read at home; nothing afterwards can make up for the delight of growing up in the company of Peveril of the Peak, Meg Merrilies, Oldbuck, the Master of Ravenshoe, Caleb Baldestone, and the rest: and every page is a training in righteous living and gentlemanlike feeling. But novels are not the only resource; well-written books of travel are always charming, and, better than anything, good biographies of interesting people: not any of the single-volume series of "Eminent" persons, but a big two-volume book that gives you time to become at home with your man.

Important historical works had better be reserved for holiday reading, but historical and literary essays, like Macaulay's, Fronde's "Short Studies," Carlyle's "Heroes and Hero Worship," afford very delightful reading. There is no hurry. The evening reading is not task work. It is not important that many books should be read; but it is important that only good books should be read, and read with such ease and pleasant leisure that they become to the hearers so much mental property for life.

The introduction to a great author should be made a matter of some ceremony. I do not know whether a first introduction to Ruskin, for instance, is the cause of such real emotion now as it was to intelligent young people of my generation; but the "Crown of Wild Olives" still, probably, marks a literary epoch for most young readers.

One other point: it is hopeless and unnecessary to attempt to keep up with current literature. Hereafter, it may be necessary to make some struggle to keep abreast of the new books as they pour from the press; but let the leisure of youth be spent upon "standard" authors, that have lived through, at least, twenty years of praise and blame.

#### Poetry as a Means of Culture.

Poetry takes first rank as a means of intellectual culture. Some one says that one ought to see a good picture, hear good music, and read some good poetry every day; and, certainly, a little poetry should form part of the evening lecture. "Collections" of poems are to be eschewed; but some one poet should have at least a year to himself, that he may have time to do what is in him towards cultivating the seeing eye, the hearing ear, the generous heart. Scott, of course, here as before, opens the ball, if only for the chivalry, the youthful enthusiasm of his verse.

Then there is always a stirring story in the poem, a recommendation to the young reader. Cowper, who does not tell many stories, is read with pleasure by boys and girls almost as soon as they begin to care for Scott; the careful, truthful word-painting of "The Task," unobscured by poetic fancies, appears to suit the matter-of-fact young mind. Then, it is pleasant to know poetry which there is frequent opportunity of verifying:—

"The cattle mourn in corners  
Where the fence screens them:—"

who that takes winter walks in the country has not seen that? Goldsmith, and some others, take their places beside Cowper, to be read or not, as occasion offers. Longfellow, sympathetic, yet wholesome, is delightful at the age of

*But why correct poems? The worst modern English is the best. I should like to know it. It is a pity even to check it. I have heard of 100 books for the 100 books for another.*

fourteen or fifteen, when self-consciousness begins to send out feelers, and a *sonnet* of poetic melancholy is taking. It is doubtful if Milton, sublime as he is, is so serviceable for the culture of the "unlearned and ignorant" as some less distinguished poets; he gets out of reach, into regions of scholarship and fancy, where these fail to follow. But, of course, Milton must be duly read: the effort to follow his "high themes" is culture in itself.

Many of us will feel that Wordsworth is the poet to read, and grow thereby. This great poet has proved a power in the life of many who have come to him with receptive mind and enough culture to perceive the depths below his translucent simplicity. He is a power, and a power for good, making for whatever is true, pure, simple, humble, teachable; for what is *super-sensuous*, at any rate, if not spiritual.

The adventures of Una and her tardy, finally victorious knight afford great food for the imagination, lofty teaching, and fine culture of the poetic sense. It is a misfortune to grow up without having read and dreamt over the "Faerie Queen."

There is no time to glance at even the few poets, each of whom should have his share in the cultivation of the mind. After the ploughing and harrowing, will be a process of natural selection; this poet will draw disciples here, that elsewhere; but it is the part of parents to bring the minds of their children under the influence of the highest, purest poetic thought we have. As for Coleridge, Keats, Shelley, and others of the "lords of language," it may be well to introduce them to the young by fragments only.

And Shakespeare? He, indeed, is not to be classed, and timed, and treated as one amongst others; he, who might well be the daily bread of the intellectual life, Shakespeare is not to be studied in a year; he is to be read, at stated periods, continuously throughout life, from ten years old and upwards. But a child often cannot understand Shakespeare. No; but can a man of fifty? Is not the great poet rather an ample feast of which every one takes according to his needs, and leaves what he has no stomach for? A little girl of nine said to me the other day that she had only read one play of Shakespeare's through, and that that was "A Midsummer Night's Dream;" but this was on her own account. She did not understand the play, of course, but she must have found enough to amuse and interest her. How would it be to have a monthly reading of Shakespeare—a play, to be read in character, and continued for two or three evenings until it is finished? The Shakespeare evenings would come to be looked on as a family *festa*; and the plays, read again and again, year after year, would yield more at each reading, and would leave behind in the end rich deposits of wisdom.

It is unnecessary to say a word about the great contemporary poets, Browning, Tennyson, and whoever else stands out from the crowd; each will secure his own following of young disciples from amongst those who have had the poetic taste developed; and to develop this appreciative power, rather than to direct its use, is the business of the parents.

So much for the evening readings, which will in themselves carry on the intellectual culture we have in view; given, the right book, family sympathy in the reading of it, and easy talk about it, and the rest will take care of itself.

The evening readings should be entertaining, and not of a kind to demand severe mental effort; but the long holidays are too long for mere intellectual dawdling. Every Christmas and summer vacation should be marked by the family reading of some great work of literary renown, whether of history, or, purely, of *belles lettres*. The daily reading and discussion of one such work as Prescott's "Conquest of Mexico," and of "Peru," Motley's "Rise of the Dutch Republic," Carlyle's "French Revolution," will give meaning and coherence to the history "grind" of the school, will keep up a state of mental activity, and will add zest to the general play and leisure of the holidays.

#### Table-talk.

The character of the family reading will affect that of the talk; but, considering how little parents see of young people once entered on their school career, it is worth while to say a few words of the table-talk which affords parents their best opportunity of influencing the opinions of the young. Every one is agreed that animated table-talk is a condition of health. No one excuses the churlish temper which allows a member of a family to sit down absorbed in his own reflections, and with hardly a word for his neighbours. But conversation at table is something more than a means of amusement and refreshment. The career of many a young person has turned upon some chance remark made at the home table. Do but watch the eagerness with which the young catch up every remark made by their elders on public affairs, books, men, and you will see they are really trying to construct a chart to steer by; they want to know what to do, it is true, but they also want to know what to *think* about everything. Parents sometimes forget that it is their duty to give their children grounds for a sound opinion upon many questions which concern us as human beings and as citizens; and then they are scandalized when the young folk air audacious views picked up from some advanced light of their own age and standing. But they will have views: the right to have and to hold an opinion is one of those points on which the youth makes a stand. [A few parents are unjust in this matter.

*Why not read Coleridge and Keats in fragments? Why not read Keats? Always, always, always.*

*I am afraid I agree with my little nephew when he says that the best reading is the best.*

*2. Year.*

It is not only the right, but the duty, of the growing intelligence to consider the facts that come before it, and to form conclusions; and the assumption that parents have a right to think for their children, and pass on their own views unmodified upon literature and art, manners and morals, is exceedingly trying to the young; the headstrong resent it, the easy-going avoid discussion, and take their own way. But it is said the young are in no condition to form sound opinions; they have neither the knowledge nor the experience which should guide them. That is true, and they know it, and hang on the lips of their elders for what may help them to adjust their views of life. Here is the opportunity of parents: the young people will not take ready-made opinions, therefore suppress yours; put the facts before them in the fairest, fullest light, and leave them to their own conclusions. The more you withhold your opinions, the more anxious they are to get at them. People are, for them, sharply divided into good and bad; actions are vicious or virtuous; events come as blessings or misfortunes. They have not arrived at the "years that bring the philosophic mind;" they are inclined to be severe, and have no notion of a middle view. "Wasn't Rosalind a rather forward girl?" "Wasn't Mahomet an impostor?" "Aren't the Poles dirty?" they ask, bent upon a "Yes" or "No."

Now, this period in the life of a boy or girl, when he or she feels the necessity of having an opinion upon every subject under the sun, is a critical one—a turning-point, for better or worse, in the lives of many young people; and, for this reason, they will find somewhere the confidant who is to mould their opinions for them. Many a mother can put her finger on the moment when her boy or girl came under the influence of So-and-so, and took to giddy or godless courses. This culture of judgment in the crude mind of the youth is one of the most delicate tasks imposed on the parent. He must not be arbitrary, we have seen. He must not be negligent. He must not be didactic; the young cannot stand preaching. He must be liberal, gentle, just, inclined to take large kindly views, to praise rather than to blame, but uncompromising on questions of principle, quick to put his finger on the blot, ready to forgive, but not to excuse; and, at the same time, ready to allow virtues to the man who exhibits one vice. This last is important; the young, with their sharp demarcations, when they find themselves in his company, discover that the devil is not so black as he was painted, and, forthwith, conclude that he is a very good fellow, and that the bad things said about him are slanders. This is the natural history of half the ruinous companionships young people form. If they come forth, on the contrary, armed with this sort of opinion, "So-and-so is a 'fast' girl; she is really honest and good-natured, but her lawlessness and love of display make her an injurious companion to whoever does not wish to catch her failings,"—the case is altered; the girl has had fair play; their love of justice is satisfied; it is not left to them to make a discovery of her goodness; her faults offend their taste, and they have no drawings towards her companionship. [Allowing that it rests with the parents to give their children grounds for sound opinions on men and movements, books and events, when are they to get opportunity for this sort of culture? Whenever they fall into talk with, or in the presence of, their children; but especially at table—other opportunities come by chance, but this is to be relied on. I was once spending an evening in company with a wise and learned man, and had much delightful talk until he unfortunately said, "I jotted down so-and-so as a subject of conversation;" that spoiled it. But, indeed, it is very well worth while for parents to lay themselves out for conversation with their children, and to store up from day to day a few subjects of general interest; only they must not reveal the "jotting down." If the parents come to table with preoccupied minds, the young people either fall silent, or get the talk into their own hands; in which case, it is either the "shop" of school and playground, or the "Who danced with whom, and who is like to wed," of a more advanced age. This is the opportunity to keep the young people as *courant* with the topics of the day,—who has made a weighty speech; who has written a new book, what its merits and defects; what wars and rumours of wars are there; who has painted a good picture, and what the characteristics of his style. The *Times* newspaper and a good weekly or monthly review will furnish material for talk every day in the week. The father who opens the talk need not be afraid he will have to sustain a monologue; indeed, he had better avoid posing; and nothing is more delightful than the eager way the children toss the ball to and fro. They want to know the ins and outs of everything, recollect something which illustrates the point, and inevitably corner the thing talked about for investigation—is it "right," or "wrong," "good," or "bad;" while the parents display their tact in leading their children to form just opinions without laying down the law for them. The boys and girls are engaged with the past, both in their school work and their home reading, and any effort to bring them abreast of the times is gratifying to them; moreover, it has a vivifying effect on their studies.

#### Aesthetic Culture.

In venturing to discuss the means of aesthetic culture, I feel that to formulate canons of taste is the same sort of thing as to draw up rules of conscience; that is, to attempt

to do for other people what every one must do for himself. It may be vicious to have a flower pattern on one's carpet, and correct to have such a pattern on one's curtains; but, if so, the perception of the fact must be the result of growth under culture. If it come to us as an edict of "fashion" that we adorn our rooms with billushes and peacock's feathers, that we use geometrical forms in decorative art, rather than natural forms conventionally treated, that we affect sage-green and terra-cotta,—however good may be the effect of room or person, there is little taste displayed in either. For *taste* is the very flower, the most delicate expression of individuality, in a person who has grown up amidst objects lovely and befitting, and has been exercised in the habit of discrimination. Here we get a hint as to what may and what may not be done by way of cultivating the aesthetic sense in young people. As far as possible, let their surroundings be brought together on a principle of natural selection, not at haphazard, and not in obedience to fashion. Bear in mind, and let them often hear discussed and see applied, the three or four general principles which fit all occasions of building, decorating, furnishing, dressing: the thing must be *fit* for its purpose; must harmonize with both the persons and the things about it; and, these points considered, must be as lovely as may be in form, texture, and colour; one point more—it is better to have too little than too much. The child who is accustomed to see a vase banished, a chintz chosen, on some such principles as these, involuntarily exercises discriminating power: feels the jar of inharmonious colouring, rejects a bed-room water-jug all angles, for one with flowing curves, and knows what he is about. It may not be possible to surround him with what Mrs. Malaprop calls objects of "bigotry and virtue," nor is it necessary; but, certainly, he need not live amongst ugly and discordant objects; because a blank is always better than the wrong thing.

It is a pity that, in pictures and music, we are inclined to form "collections," just as in poetry. Let us eschew collections. Every painter, every composer, worth the name, has a few master ideas, which he works out, not in a single piece, but here a little and there a little, in a series of studies. If we accept the work of the artist as a mere external decoration, why, a little of one and a little of another does very well; but if we accept the man as a teacher who is to have a refining, elevating effect upon our coarser nature, we must study his lessons in sequence as far as we have opportunity. A house with one room hung with engravings from Turner, another with Landseer's, a third with Wilkie's pictures, would be a real school of art for the child: he would have opportunity of studying, line by line, three masters at least, of comparing their styles, getting their characteristics by heart, perceiving what they mean to say by their pictures, and how they express their meaning. And here is a sound foundation for art-education, which should perhaps, for most of us, consist rather in drawing out the power to appreciate than the power to produce. It is not always possible to choose pictures according to any plan; but in default of more, it is something to get so thoroughly acquainted with even a good engraving of any one picture that the image of it retained by the brain is almost as distinct as the picture itself. All that the parents can do is to secure that the picture is *looked at*; the refining influence, the art-culture, goes on independently of effort from without. The important thing is, not to vitiate the boy's taste; better to have a single work of art in the house upon which his ideas form themselves than to have every wall covered with daubs. That the young people must wait for opportunities afforded by picture-galleries to learn how the brush can catch the very spirit and meaning of nature, is not so great a loss as it would seem at first sight. The study of landscape should prepare them for that of pictures: no one can appreciate the moist solid freshness of the newly ploughed earth in Rosa Bonheur's pictures who has not himself been struck by the look of the clods just turned up by the plough.

Pictures or landscape, all the parents can do is to put their children in the way of seeing, and, by a suggestive word, get them to look. The eye is trained by seeing, but also by instruction. I need hardly call your attention to Mr. Ruskin's "Modern Painters," as the book which makes art-education possible to outsiders.

If culture flows in through the eye, how much more through the ear, the organ of the blessed sixth sense which appears to be distributed amongst us with partial favour. A great deal of time and a good deal of money is commonly spent to secure to the young people the power of performing indifferently upon an instrument; nor is even an indifferent performance to be despised; but it is not always borne in mind that to listen with discriminating delight is as educative and as "happy-making" as to produce; and that this power might, probably, be developed in everybody, if only as much pains were spent in the cultivation of the musical sense as upon that of the musical faculty. Let the young people hear good music as often as possible, and that, under instruction. It is a pity we like our music, as our pictures and our poetry, mixed, so that there are few opportunities of going through, as a listener, a course of the works of a single composer. But this is to be aimed at for the young people; let them study under one master until they have received some of his teaching and know his style.

#### LECTURE IX.

##### MAIDENHOOD—THE FORMATION OF CHARACTER AND OPINION.

"For life in general there is but one decree. Youth is a blunder."—DIERAHL.

THE idea of staying at home "for good" is delightful to the schoolgirl, and her parents look forward with equal pleasure to having their daughter about them in her bright fresh youth. If the young girl be docile and gentle, and ready to fall into the relation of pupil-friend to her parents, and if they be wise and kind enough to put themselves in the place of their daughter, and realize how much teaching and counsel she still requires of them, the relation is a very sweet one. If, on the other hand, the parents are content to let their young daughter shake down into her place with the notion that all they have to do now is to give her a fair share of whatever "home" offers, the relation is found embarrassing, both by the girl and her parents. Her maiden sweetness notwithstanding, the parents are disappointed to find their daughter so little formed. She is not an interesting companion at present. Poor child! her talk is full of "oh's," "well's," "you know's." She has many unreasoning enthusiasms and aversions, and these are her opinions, such as they are. She has brought some little knowledge out of the school-room, but this appears to do little towards giving her soundness of judgment. Her affections are as lawless as her opinions: all the emotional sentiment in her is bestowed on some outsider, girl or woman friend, most likely, while the people who have claims on her are overlooked royally. So of her moral sense: duties she acknowledges, and will move heaven and earth to fulfil them—overstrained loyalty to a friend, excessive religious observance, perhaps; while she is comically blind to duty as her elders see it; has small scruples about disobedience, evasions, even deliberate fibs. She could do great things in a great cause, so she thinks, but the trivial round, the common task, afford her occasions of stumbling. She likes to talk about herself—what she feels, thinks, purposes, and her talk is pathetic, as showing how far she is in the dark as to the nature of the *self* about which her thoughts are playing curiously. And this is a thoroughly nice girl, a girl who will make something of herself at last, even if left to her own devices, but whom a little friendly help may save from much blundering and sadness.

There are girls of another pattern, who have no enthusiasms—other than a new dress excites; who do not "gush," have no exaggerated notions of duty or affection, but look upon the world as a place wherein they are to *have* and to *get*, but not, save under compulsion, to *do*, to *bear*, and to *give*: these three, which make up the ideal of a noble life, have no part in their thoughts. Girls of this sort are easier to get on with than the others, because they have marked out a line for themselves, and know what they are about; but there is no principle of growth in such a nature. There are maidens so sweet that, no more than the lilies of the field do they seem to lack human culture. But the average nice girl, who leaves school with her education "finished," so she thinks, and is yet in this crude state, what is to be done with her? The very insufficiency of her young daughter appeals as strongly to the mother as does the helplessness of her infant. The schools have not finished, but begun the education of the girl, and now she has come home to be taught how to make the best of herself, and *how she is to succeed in life*—for that is the problem before her. Rich or poor, married or single, it is not upon these that the success of a woman's life depends. Many a rich woman, whose children run over her, whose husband slights her, knows sorrowfully that she has made a failure of life: while many a poor woman is a queen in her own house, or a much-regarded presence in a house that is not hers. The woman who has herself well in hand, who thinks her own thoughts, reserves her judgments, considers her speech, controls her actions, she is the woman who succeeds in life, with a success to be measured by her powers of heart, brain, and soul.

#### Culture of Character.

(a) *By Instruction.*—A woman's success in life depends on what force of character is in her; and character is to be got, like any other power, by dint of precept and practice: therefore, show the girl what she is, what she is not, how she is to become what she is not, and give her free scope to act and think for herself. What she is, is an exceedingly interesting study to the poor child, and open discussion on this subject helps her out of foolish and morbid feeling. She is full of vague self-consciousness, watching curiously the thoughts and emotions within her—an extraordinary spectacle to her inexperienced mind, leading her to the secret conviction that she is some great one, or, at any rate, is peculiar, different from the people about her. Hence arises much *mauvaise honte*, shyness, awkwardness; she feels herself the ugly duckling, unappreciated by the waddling ducks about her. She is clumsy enough at present, and is ready to run it; but wait a bit, until the full-grown swan appear, and then they will see! Now, this stage of self-consciousness, and ignorant much-doubting self-exaltation, this "awkward age," as

people call it, is common to all thoughtful girls who have the wit to perceive that there is more in *them* than meets the eye, but have not begun to concern themselves about what may or may not be in other people. It is a moral complaint, in which the girl requires treatment and tender nursing—only of a moral kind—as truly as she did when she had measles. If left to herself, she becomes capricious, morbid, hysterical; the years in which the foundations of sound character should be laid are wasted; and many a peevish, jealous, exacting woman owes the shipwreck of her life to the fact that nobody in her youth taught her to think reasonably of herself and of other people. It is only a few who founder; many girls are graciously saved: but this does not make it the less imperative on the mother to see her child safely through the troublous days of her early youth.

The best physic for the girl is a course of moral and mental science; not necessarily a profound course, but just enough to let her see where she is: that her noble dream of doing something great or good by-and-by—for which achievement she is ready to claim credit beforehand—is shared, in one form or other, by every human being; for that this desire of power, the desire of goodness, are common to us all: that the generous impulse, which makes her stand up for her absent friend, and say fierce things in her behalf, is no cause for elation and a sense of superior virtue, for it is but a movement of those affections of benevolence and justice which are implanted in every human breast.

By the time the girl has discovered how much of her is common to all the world, she will be prepared to look with less admiring wonder at her secret self, and with more respect upon other people. For it is not that she has been guilty of foolish pride: she has simply been filled with honest and puzzled wonder at the fine things she has discovered in human nature as seen in herself. All her fault has been the pardonable mistake of thinking herself an exceptional person; for how is it possible that the people about her should have so much in them and so little come of it? Let her know that she is quite right about herself—that she has within her the possibilities she dreams of, and more; but, that, so have others, and that, upon what she makes of herself, not upon what is in her, judgment will be passed. It is not quite easy to find works on metaphysical subjects simple enough in thought and diction for the girls to take in. Dr. Abercrombie's "Moral Feelings," George Combe's "Moral Philosophy," and Dr. Andrew Combe's "Principles of Physiology" should be useful, and may answer the purpose better than many valuable recent works on these subjects, because the matter in them is simply and interestingly put.

It is true that a life of stirring action and great responsibility is the readiest way to develop character—better or worse; but not one woman in a thousand leads such a life; and then, not until she has reached maturity. Put into the hands of the girl the means of doing for herself what only exceptional circumstances will do for her; teach her, that is, the principles and methods of *self-culture*, seeing that you cannot undertake to provide for her the culture of circumstances. To point out these principles and methods in detail would be to go over the ground we have attempted to cover in the former lectures. By the time the girl has some insight into the nature of those appetites, affections, emotions, desires, which are the springs of human action; into the extraordinary power of habit, which, though acquired by us, and not born in us, has more compelling force than any or all of the inborn principles of action; into the imperious character of the will which rules the man, and yet is to be ruled and trained by the man; into the functions of conscience, and into the conditions of the spiritual life,—by the time she has some practical, if only fragmentary notions on these great subjects, she may be led to consider her own nature and disposition with profit. So far from encouraging the habit of morbid introspection, such a practical dealing with herself is the very best cure for it. She no longer compares herself with herself, and judges herself by herself; but, knowing what are the endowments and what the risks proper to human nature, she is able to think soberly of, and to deal prudently with herself, and is in a position to value the counsels of her mother.

(b) *By Training in Practical Affairs.*—These counsels come to her aid in the small practical affairs of life, as telling her, not what she must do, but the principles on which she should act. Thus, she goes to the draper's; looks at this stuff, at that, at the other; now she will have this, now the other; no, neither will do; and at last, she turns to her mother in despair, and says, "You choose." That will not do: that is, by so much, a failure in life. Her mother takes her to task. Before she goes shopping, she must use her reason, and that rapidly, to lay down the principles on which she is to choose her dress,—it is to be pretty, becoming, suitable for the occasions on which it is to be worn, in harmony with what else is worn with it. Now, she goes to shop; is able to describe definitely what she wants; to say "No," instantly to the wrong thing, "Yes," to the right; judgment is prompt to decide upon the grounds already laid down by reason; and, what is more, the will already laid down by reason; not allowing so much as steps in to make the decision final, not allowing so much as a twinge of after-regret for that "sweet thing" which she did not buy. For the sake of cultivating decision of character, even a leap in the dark like that of Sydney Smith's little

Mrs. Malaprop seems to be a professor.

I write all through the book a copy in line and then as to the class for whom it is meant. I mean, now as I have for those young people can select their suggestions in this way. And how hard would be a how we hang with suggest we all the water colour sketches would be worth a suggestion.

in this English?

But you mean that to be a school is the normal state of a girl, isn't it?

Possible! Abercrombie interesting! I know it. I have myself tried to read it. Did my human being ever finish it?

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maid, Bunch, when she chose, quick as thought, between venison and wild duck, having never tasted either, is to be preferred to the endless dilly-dallying, deliberation, taking of advice here and there, in which the lives of some women are passed—to the trial of their friends.

Again, she is given to dawdling: a letter, some slight household task, "lasts out;" an hour is spent on what should be done in fifteen minutes. Want of attention is, probably, the failing her mother comes down upon. Many a mother of energetic character brings up for herself a dawdling daughter, for this reason—the mother is so "managing," so ready to settle the employments and amusements of everybody about her, that the girl's only chance of getting a few minutes at her own disposal is to dawdle; and this leads to small deceptions, furtive readings of story-books, any of the subterfuges of the weak in dealing with the strong.

The mother's task in dealing with her growing daughter is one of extreme delicacy. It is only as her daughter's ally and confidante she can be of use to her now. She will keep herself in the background, declining to take the task of self-direction out of her daughter's hands. She will watch for opportunities to give word or look of encouragement to every growing grace. She will deal with failings with a gentle hand, remembering that even failures in veracity or integrity, distressing as they are, arise usually from the very moral weakness which she is setting herself to strengthen. On discovering such fault, the mother will not cover her daughter with shame; the distress she feels, she will show, but so that the girl perceives her mother is sharing her sorrow, and sorrowing for her sake. What is the root of the error? No due sense of the sanctity of truth, an undue fear of consequences, chiefly of loss of esteem. The girl is betrayed into a deliberate lie; she has not, she says, written such and such a letter, said such and such words;—you knowing, all the time, that she *has* done this thing. Deal gently with her: she is no longer a child to be punished or "disgraced" at her parents' pleasure; it is before her own conscience she must stand or fall now. But do not let her alone with the hopeless sense that there is no more to be done for her. Remember that conscience and intellect are still immature, that will is feeble. Give her simple sincere teaching in the nature of truth. Let her know what truth is—the simple statement of facts as they are; that all our spoken words deal with facts, and that, therefore, the obligation of truth is laid upon them all. We should never open our lips without speaking the truth. That even a jest which misleads another is a lie. That perfect truthfulness, in thought, speech, and act, is an obligation laid upon us by God. That the duty is binding, not only with regard to our friends, but towards every one with whom we hold speech. The Christian mother will add deeper teaching about the Truth from Whom all truth proceeds. She will caution her daughter as to the need of self-recollection in speech. She says she is "quite well, thank you," when she has a headache; that she "will be done in a minute," when the minute means half an hour; these departures from fact slip out without thought—therefore, think first, and speak after. But such trifles surely do not matter? if so, who may cast a stone? Most of us might mend our ways in this matter; but every guard she can place upon herself is of real value to the girl with an inadequate sense of truth, as a means of training herself in the truthful habits which go to form a truthful character. Then, train her by trusting her. Believe her always; give her opportunities to condemn herself in speaking the truth, and her courage will answer the demand upon it. A mere enumeration of the duties which truthfulness comprehends, of the vices which are different forms of lying, is helpful and instructive. The heart rises and resolves upon the mere hearing that *veracity* is that truthfulness in common talk which is careful to state the least important fact as it is; that *simplicity* tells its tale without regard to self, without any thought of showing self to advantage in the telling; that *sincerity* tells the whole truth purely, however much it might be to the speaker's advantage to keep any part back; that *frankness* is the habit of speaking of one's own affairs openly and freely—a duty we owe to the people we live amongst; that *fidelity*, the keeping of one's word, in great things and small, belongs to the truthful character. So beautiful and attractive is truth, that to every thinking person it is as a pearl of price. But, alas, the temptations to lie are manifold.

#### Liberty and Responsibility.

"With household motions light and free,  
And steps of virgin liberty."

says Wordsworth of the girl who was to become that "perfect woman." Now, it sometimes happens that the mothers who take most pains to make their daughters deft and capable in "household motions," forget the "steps of virgin liberty." If the girl is to become a free woman with the courage of her opinions, she must grow up to the habit of liberty—not licence, but liberty, for the use of which she is open to be called to account. Let her distribute her time as she likes, but count her tale of bricks; let her choose books for her own reading, but know what she chooses; let her choose her own companions, but put before her the principles on which to choose, and the home duties which should prevent their having too much of her time. Let her have the spending of

money,—first, a small allowance out of which certain *necessary* expenses must come, as well as spendings for her pleasure, and a reserve for gifts and alms; and, as soon as she can be trusted with it, an allowance large enough to dress herself out of,—that she may learn prudence by doing without necessities when she wastes on fancies. One reason why she should have the spending of her own allowance is, that she may learn early the delight and the cost of giving, and may grow up in the habit of appropriating a fixed part of her little income to the help of the needy.

The care of her own health is another responsibility which should be made over to the young maiden. She cannot learn too soon that good health is not only a blessing, but a *duty*; that we may all take means to secure more or less vigorous health, and that we are criminal in so far as we fail to make use of these means. Any little book on the laws of health will put her in possession of the few simple principles of hygiene:—the daily bath, attended with much friction of the skin; the regular and sufficient exercise in the open air; the vigorous use of all the limbs; exercise of moderation in diet and in sleep; the free admission of fresh air to the bed-room; the due airing of the under-clothing taken off at night; the necessity for active habits, for regular and hard, but not excessive brain-work; the resolute repression of ugly tempers and unbecoming thoughts,—all of these are conditions of a sound mind in a sound body. And for keeping ourselves in this delightful state of existence we are all more or less responsible. The girl who eats too much, or eats what does not suit her, and is laid up with a bilious attack; the girl who sits for hours poring over a novel, to the damage of her eyes, her brain, and her general nervous system, is guilty of a lesser fault of the nature of suicide. We are all apt, especially in youth, to overlook our accountability in the matter of health, and to think we may do what we like with our own; but, indeed, no offences are more inevitably and severely punished by the action of natural law than the neglect of the common principles of hygiene.

"Thine own friend and thy father's friend forsake not." The responsibility of keeping up courteous and kindly relations by letter, call, or little attentions with near and distant neighbours and friends is wholesome for the young people, and is a training in that general kindness of spirit which the ardour of their particular affections sometimes causes them to fail in.

#### Conduct.

The conduct of a well brought-up girl—that is, her behaviour in various circumstances—will, on the whole, take care of itself. But in this, as in greater matters,—

"More harm is wrought through want of thought,  
Than e'er through want of heart;"

and the mother will find opportunities to bring before her daughter the necessity for circumspection, reticence, self-control, the duty of consideration for others. Conduct at home is regulated by such plain principles of duty that we need do no more than say a word as to the proprieties of life which should be kept up in the home circle as in any other society: behaviour which would be unbecoming in any drawing-room is unbecoming in that of home. In the street, the concert-room, the shop, in whatever public places she frequents, the young maiden has a distinct rôle, and must give a little study to her part. It will not do for her to go through the world with open mouth, wide-gazing eyes, head turned to this side and that, heedless tongue, like a child at a fair. But should not the girl behave *naturally* in public as in private? Alas! the fact is, that none of us, not even the little children, can afford to behave quite naturally, except in so far as use has become second nature to us in the acquired art of conducting ourselves becomingly. *Noblesse oblige*: maidenly dignity requires the modest eye, the quiet, retiring mien, subdued tones, reticence in regard to emotions of wonder, pleasure, interest, the expression of which might make the young girl a spectacle in the public streets—that is, might cause a passer-by to look at her a second time. For, excepting the children, there is nothing so interesting to be seen in public places as the young maidens approaching womanhood. They cannot fail to attract attention, but they owe it to themselves not to lay themselves open to this attention. One claim, however, the public, in the shape of the casual passer-by, certainly has; he has a right to a gentle, not repellent, if retiring, expression of countenance, and to courtesy, even deference, of tone and manner in any chance encounter; and this, even more if he be in the garb of a working man than if in that of a gentleman. It is worth while to bear in mind the "Madam, respect the burden," with which Napoleon Bonaparte moved out of the path of a charcoal carrier. This propriety of behaviour is mingling affection if it be no more than a manner put on with the girl's out-of-door garments: it must be the outcome of what her mother has brought her up to think that she owes to herself and to other people; and from few but her mother can a girl acquire this mark of a gentlewoman.

How to conduct herself in society is a question of enormous interest to the maiden making her *début*. The subject is so large as to have called forth a literature of its own; but the principle lies in a nutshell. In society, as in the streets and public places, the girl whose mother has caused her to comprehend the respect due to herself, and the respect

due to other people, will not make any grave *faux pas*. She goes into a room persuaded that she has claims upon the respect and consideration of whoever she may meet there; and she moves with ease, talks with quiet confidence, possesses herself in repose of manner. She is persuaded that her rights in this respect are not a matter of successful rivalry, but that each person in the room has equal claims upon her courtesy and upon that of every other; and that her entertainers for the time being have a right to peculiar deference. She will preserve self-possession and self-respect in intercourse with those who are socially her superiors, and will behave with sincere humility and deference to her inferiors. So of her intercourse with gentlemen: due self-respect and due respect for them will cause her to behave with the simplicity, courtesy, and ease which she shows in her intercourse with women. In fact, these two principles will carry her with dignity and grace through all social occasions and in all social relations.

And how is the mother to enhance her daughter's self-respect? Is she to tell her, never so indirectly, that she is clever, pretty, charming, that no one can fail to admire her? If she do, her daughter may well become a forward young woman. No; she must put forward none but common claims. Because she is a woman, because she is a lady, because she is a guest, a fellow-guest, because she is a stranger, or because she is friend—these, and such as these, are incontestable claims upon the courteous attention of every person she meets in society. One quietly confident in such claims as these seldom experiences a rebuff. Whatever she may receive or give, over and above, on the score of *personal* merit, settles itself; but the thing to be settled in a girl's mind is a due sense of the claims she has and the claims she must yield.

#### Pleasure and Duty.

We come now to consider a perplexing question which comes up for settlement upon the close of a girl's school career. Two rival claimants upon her time and interest are in the field—pleasure and duty; the question is, what is to be allowed to each, and how far may they clash. Kindhearted parents who find that their daughter is continually wanted for picnic or tennis, ball or concert, for morning lounge or evening party, withdraw the claims of duty, and leave the field to giddy pleasure. They say, "Poor child, she will never have a second youth. Every dog must have its day. We have been young ourselves; let her have a 'good time' and 'enjoy herself while she can.' If we hold her back from taking her pleasure, she will only crave for it the more; let her have a surfeit—she will settle down the more readily to a quiet life afterwards," and so on. But before they launch their daughter—

"Youth at the prow, and Pleasure at the helm,"

it behoves parents to look into the matter. In the first place, the result, the gain, of the girl's whole education hitherto is at stake. She might as well have been allowed to play ever since she was born as to play uninterruptedly now. For the gain of her education is not the amount of geography, science, and French that she knows; she will forget these soon enough unless well-trodden tracks be kept up to the brain-growth marking these acquisitions. But the solid gain education has brought her lies in the powers and habits of attention, persistent effort, intellectual and moral endeavour it has educated. Now, habits which are allowed to fall into disuse are all the same as though they had never been formed; powers not exercised grow feeble and are lost. The ground which has been gained in half a dozen years may be lost in a single one. And here we have the reason why many girls who have received what is called a good education read nothing weightier than a novel, are not intelligent companions, and show little power of moral effort. As for settling down by-and-by, that is not the question: if she is to recover the ground lost, she must begin all over again, and at an age when it is far more difficult to acquire habits and develop powers than in childhood. Again, the taste for parties of pleasure, for what may be called *organized* amusement, is an ever-growing taste, and dislodges the *habit* of taking pleasure in the evening reading, the fireside games with the children, the home music, the chat with friendly neighbours, the thousand delights that home should afford. For—

"Pleasure is spread through the earth  
In stray gifts, to be claim'd by whoever shall find;  
Thus a rich loving-kindness, redundantly kind,  
Moves all nature to gladness and mirth."

And not the least evil of incessant party-going and pleasure-seeking is, that it blinds people to the nature and conditions of pleasure: pure and true pleasure is of impromptu occurrence, a *stray* gift, to be found, not sought; it is just a thing to happen upon by the way.

What, then, of those parents who take the opposite lines,—ordain that their daughters shall stay at home and help their mothers? They did not run after pleasure, and neither shall their girls; they had to work when they were young, and so shall their daughters, for "no good comes of gadding about."

Well, to turn the tables, it is well these should remember that you cannot put an old head on young shoulders; that young things will frolic, whether they be kittens or lambs or maidens; that what becomes deliberate pleasure-seeking in older people, comes to the girls as—

"Stray gifts to be claimed by whoever shall find;"

that parties of pleasure are delightful just because they give the girls opportunities of meeting their kind, other young people in whom they rejoice, "as 'tis their nature to." Prospero was not sufficient for Miranda. Birds of a feather flock together, and the young to the young.

The thing, then, is, to draw the line wisely. The extreme is mischievous. The girl must have definite duties on which pleasure schemes are rarely allowed to encroach—a rule, for going out once, twice, a week?—certain evenings reserved for home pleasures, the mornings for regular occupations and duties, and, as far as the unfortunate habits of society allow, evening amusements avoided which spoil the following morning. But to suggest rules on this subject would be presumptuous: every mother ordains for her own daughters, remembering how—

"All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy,  
All play and no work makes Jack a mere toy."

#### Opinions.

Let us turn to a question too often overlooked in the bringing up of girls. A girl may have opinions upon questions of figure and style, fashion and furniture, but who cares what she thinks about public men and questions, books and events? All the same, what she thinks is of consequence to the world; even if she is not to be the mother of future fathers and mothers, she will make her mark somehow.

The young maiden should have a general and a special preparation towards the forming of just opinions. For the first, she should be made to use her common sense upon the questions that occur. "What do you think of so-and-so?" says the mother, making a little wholesome fun if her thoughts be foolish. But the special preparation requires more thought. What are the subjects upon which thinking persons generally must have opinions? It is upon these the girl should be qualified to judge. In the first place, her success in life will depend greatly upon the relations with other people into which she lets herself be drawn. She must have some knowledge of character, human motives; and, therefore, as much as for the sake of her own development, every girl ought to go through some easy course of moral philosophy. We know how easily a girl is carried away by plausible ways of putting things, until she finds herself bound to a worthless friend or unworthy lover. And what is the poor girl to do if she have nothing to oppose to—"Oh, everybody thinks so now!" "That's a mere old-world grandmother's notion of propriety;" "A man's first duty is to look after himself, and it stands to reason that if everybody does that, nobody need trouble himself about other people." A girl who has reasons for what she thinks, withdraws herself from such shallow talk on these points.

Again, women should know something of the principles of political economy. How many ladies are ready to decide off-hand that "it would be good for trade if an earthquake shook down all the houses in London;" that, "if all the farmers in England excused their tenants paying rent, bread would be cheaper;" or, that "the wealth of England would have been increased if the country had contained gold mines, instead of our iron and coal;" in fact, to fall into any one of the little traps which Mrs. Fawcett sets for the unwary, in her "Political Economy for Beginners,"—which is, by the way, an interesting little work, and the girl who studies it with thoughtful attention will be in a position to form sensible opinions on some of the questions of the day—the rent of land, the cotton system, free trade and protection, the relations between landlord and tenant, between capitalist and labourer, strikes, trades' unions, all of which come up to be dealt with, not as matters of opinion, but as causes, powerful to set class against class. It would be for the welfare of the country if educated women had just ideas on these subjects, not only that they should share the interests of husbands and brothers, but in order that they should see and keep before the gentlemen of their families the *other side* of questions which the press of affairs would incline the latter to look at from a personal standpoint.

Possibly, a mission is devolving upon educated women. A mediator is wanted between labour and capital, not only to persuade the master to endure in gentleness, but to open the eyes of the men to the difficulties and responsibilities of the masters; and this mediator, the lady, with her tact, sympathy, and quick intuitions, is fitted to become, if she will take pains to get the necessary knowledge. Not that she need step out of her proper sphere to meddle with public matters; only that she should qualify herself to speak an *understanding* and kindly word on these subjects, to the wife, if not to the husband, in her cottage visitings. A single sentence, showing a mastery of the subject, spoken in one cottage, may go far to turn the tide of feeling in a whole community of work-people.

Women have been clamorous for their rights, and men have, on the whole, been generous and gentle in meeting their demands. So much has been granted, that we have no right to claim immunities which belong to the seclusion of the harem. We are not free to say, "Oh, these things are beyond me; I leave such questions to gentlemen." It is not impossible that, in the course of Providence, women have of late been brought so much to the front, that they may be in

*The sentiment is  
no doubt good,  
but the judge  
who thinks  
is terrible*

We have left little time to glance at the pursuits and occupations proper for young women at home. It is becoming rather usual on the continent for the schools to intract young ladies in the duties of household economy—an invasion, perhaps, of the mother's province. Every woman should understand and know how to perform every duty of cooking or cleaning, mending or making, proper to a house; and a regular, practical course of training under her mother's eye might well occupy an hour or two of the girl's morning. May I suggest the great use and value of a household book, in which the young housekeeper notes down exactly how to do everything, from the scouring of a floor to the making of

Alon Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase)  
Awoke one night from a deep trance of peace,  
And saw within the moonlight of his room,  
Making it rich and like a lily in bloom,  
An angel writing in a book of gold.  
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,  
And to the presence in the room he said,—  
‘What writest thou?’ The vision raised his head,  
And in a voice, made all of sweet accord,  
Answer’d, ‘The names of all who love the Lord!’  
‘And is mine one?’ Ben Adhem asked. ‘Nay, not so,’  
Replied the angel. ‘Above spoke more low,  
But cheerful still,—I pray thee, then,—  
Write me as one who loves his fellow-men.’  
The angel wrote and vanished. The next night  
He came again, with a great waking light,  
And show’d the names whom love of God had bless’d,  
And lo! Ben Adhem’s led the rest.”

of common duties, pleasures, home affections. It is *natural* for the human brood, as for every other, to leave the parent nest; and when the due time comes, and the overgrown nestling has not taken flight, it is but a comfortless bird. The girl wants a career, a distinct path of life for her own feet to tread, quite as much as does the boy. But the girl will be provided for; while the boy must be made able to support himself and a family by his labour of head or hands. That is not the point: people are beginning to find out that happiness depends fully as much upon *work* as on wages. It is work, work of her very own, that the girl wants; and to keep her at home waiting for a career which may come to

In bringing this lecture to a close, let me add that it has been very unsatisfactory to me to treat in a touch-and-go style subjects of great interest and importance; but, indeed, it has been impossible to do more in the time than lay down the essential principles upon which education should be based, and to offer a few suggestive hints. I know very well that much has been left out which should have been said, but pray forgive the shortcomings in a sincere effort.